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OF

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING.

VOLUME III.

MEMOIR

OF

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING,

WITH

EXTRACTS FROM HIS CORRESPONDENCE
AND MANUSCRIPTS.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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CHAPTER III.

SOCIAL REFORMS.

Temperament and training, religious aspirations and philosophical views, above all, the tendencies of the times, conspired to make Dr. Channing a Social Reformer; although the loftiness of his desires and aims, the delicacy of his feelings, the refinement of his tastes, his habits of contemplative thought, and his reverence for individual freedom, enveloped him in a sphere of courteous reserve and guarded him from familiar contact with all rude radicalism. He was as loyal as he was independent, as gentle as he was resolute, as soft to receive any impress of beauty as he was firm to resist wrong. In a letter written but a few months before his death, he has thus faithfully portrayed his own dispositions.

" *Boston*, March 12, 1842.* I understand fully your language, when you speak of *reform* as your '*work-shop.*' I fear I understand it too well, that is, I am too prone to shrink from the work. Reform is resistance of rooted corruptions and evils, and my tendency is to turn away from the contemplation of evils. My mind seeks the good, the perfect, the beautiful. It is a degree of torture to bring vividly to my apprehension what man is suffering from his own crimes and from the wrongs and cruelty of his brother. No perfection of art, expended on purely tragic and horrible subjects, can reconcile me to them. It is only from a sense of duty that I read a narrative of guilt or woe in the papers. When the darkness, indeed, is lighted up by moral greatness or beauty, I can endure and even enjoy it. You see I am made of but poor material for a reformer. But on this very account the work is good for me. I need it, not, as many do, to give me excitement, for I find enough, perhaps too much, to excite me in the common experience of life, in meditation, in abstract truth; but to save me from a refined selfishness, to give me force, disinterestedness, true dignity and elevation, to link me by a new faith to God, by a deeper love to my race, and to make me a blessing to the world.

---

* To Mrs. Lydia Maria Child.

"I know not how far I have explained my shrinking from the work of reform, but, be the cause what it may, let us not turn away from us the cross, but willingly, gratefully, accept it, when God lays it on us; and he does lay it on us, whenever he penetrates our hearts with a deep feeling of the degradation, miseries, oppressions, crimes, of our human brethren, and awakens longings for their redemption. In thus calling us, he imposes on us a burden, such as the ancient prophets groaned under. We must 'drink of the cup' and be 'baptized into the baptism' of our Master. We must expect persecution in some form or other; but this is a light matter, compared with the painful necessity of fixing our eyes and souls on evil, and with the frequent apparent failure of our labor. Here, here is the trial. Could we lift up our fellow-creatures at once to the happiness and excellence which we aspire after, what a joy would reform be! But, alas! if we do remove a few pressing evils, how many remain! What a cloud still hangs over the earth! Sometimes evil seems to grow up under the efforts to repress it. Were it not for our *faith*, who could persevere? But with this faith, what a secret, sustaining joy flows into and mingles with sincere labors for humanity! The little we accomplish becomes to us a pledge of something infinitely greater. We know that the brighter futurity which our hearts yearn for is not a dream, — that good is to triumph over evil, and to triumph through the sacrifices of the good.

"You see I would wed you and myself to reform; and yet we must be something *more* than reformers. We must give our nature a fair chance; we must not wither it by too narrow modes of action. Let your genius have free play. We are better reformers, — because calmer and wiser, because we have more weapons to work with, — if we give a wide range to thought, imagination, taste, and the affections. We must be cheerful, too, in our war with evil, for gloom is apt to become sullenness, ill-humor, and bitterness.

"Your sincere friend."

To another friend, and at an earlier period, he wrote: —

"Give my regards to ——. My intercourse with him was not useless to me, though I fear he gained little. He has his theory made up, a state of mind excluding some discomforts, perhaps, but also improvement. My tendency has been to regard the solitary action of the *individual* as the great thing. He makes the individual nothing. It is with society, from social impulses, and as *members of the great whole*, that we are to make progress. He has led me to review my opinions.

"I always take pleasure in meeting a man who has opened his eyes on the great evils of society without being discouraged, and who is only roused by them to inquire how the good purposes of Providence may be accomplished. The bright feature of our times is the existence of generous, hopeful, sympathizing spirits, intent on the melioration of their race. They utter a great many false predictions, perhaps, but their own existence is a prophecy which must be fulfilled."

The following extracts will best reveal the spirit with which Dr. Channing was animated as a social reformer.

1825. "Christianity through its whole extent is a religion of love. I know no better name for it than Universal Love. God, not satisfied with giving lessons in his works and in our own frames, has sent a messenger of special glory, to teach us with new clearness and power the obligation, happiness, and dignity of benevolence. Christianity everywhere inculcates love, and a love so much wider, purer, nobler, than had before entered men's thoughts, that it is with propriety called a new commandment. Men, as we have seen, had felt and practised social kindness before, without a revelation, for nature always inspired it. But this kindness had been confined. It had been accumulated on a few objects. Collected, like the sun's rays, to a point, it had burned intensely; but beyond that point it had exerted little power. Before Christianity, the private affections had exhausted men's stock of love. The claims of family and of country had been recognized, but not the claims of mankind. The bond of consanguinity was felt, but not the bond of a common nature. A stranger was hardly distinguished from a foe. Beyond the limit of his country, the individual imagined he had no duties to perform, and even trampled on the rights and happiness of human beings with little compunction. But the ties of family and of country were never intended to circumscribe the soul. Man is connected at birth with a few beings, that the spirit of humanity may be called forth by their tenderness; and whenever domestic or national attachments become exclusive, engrossing, clannish, so as to shut out the general claims of the human race, the highest end of Providence is frustrated, and home, instead of being the nursery, becomes the grave of the heart.

"Christianity lays the foundation of a universal love, by revealing to us the greatness of that nature in which all men participate, — by inspiring reverence for the human soul, be that soul lodged wherever it may, — by teaching us that all the outward distinctions of birth, rank, wealth, honor, which human pride foolishly swells into importance, and which separate different classes from each other, as if they were different races, are not worthy to be named in comparison with those essential faculties and affections which the poorest and most unprosperous derive as liberally from God as those who disdain them. Christian love is founded on the grandeur of man's nature, its likeness to God, its immortality, its powers of endless progress, — on the end for which it is created, of living for ever, diffusing itself illimitably, and enjoying God and the universe through eternity. He who has never looked through man's outward condition, through the accidental trappings of fortune and fashion, to the naked soul, and there seen God's image commanding reverence and a spiritual grandeur which turns to littleness all that is most glorious in nature, — such a man may have kindness, for of this he cannot easily divest himself, but he is a stranger to the distinctive love of Christianity, and knows nothing of the intenseness and diffusiveness with which the heart can bind itself to the human race.

"The true Christian, who is instructed by Christ in the nature of the soul, and in the purposes for which it was made, comes to love *man* as *man*, and to be interested in him wherever he dwells. The bounds of family or of country cannot confine him. Wherever human nature has put itself forth in power and virtue, he delights to contemplate it, and feels a brother's union with the excellent who have shed a lustre on past times, or who shine in distant regions, and even with the good who have ascended to heaven. The thought, that each human being has within him the capacities of like excellence, and that Christ has lived and died to kindle this divine life in all souls, creates an interest in every human being which neither distance, nor strangeness, nor injury, nor even vice, can destroy. . . . . .

" Much, much, indeed, remains for Christianity to achieve and to conquer, before it will accomplish its office of inspiring in all men this universal love. It has to break down the aristocracy of birth, the aristocracy of wealth, the sectarianism and bigotry of the religious world, the clannish spirit of nations, and many other barriers of pride and selfishness. But it is equal to its work. It is silently, but steadily, teaching men to recognize their nature and the great purposes of their being, — proving to them that there is no glory but in self-conquest and in a wide charity, — pleading the cause of the poor, the ignorant, and the stranger, — infusing a candor which sees with joy the virtues of other parties, other sects, other countries, — and gradually generating in the individual the consciousness that he is made for his race, for God, and for the universe. This spirit is too godlike to be gained and perfected in a moment or a century, or even during man's existence in this world. It is enough that we see in men the dawning and promise of this universal love."

Measured by this ideal of unity, harmony, and perfect coöperation, the actual life in professedly Christian communities appeared to Dr. Channing as little like the true " kingdom of heaven," as the unsteady steps and awkward gestures of a child just learning to walk resemble the graceful vigor of mature manhood. But from the successes of the past he drew animating hopes for the future. His views of the social needs of Christendom are thus presented.

" *November*, 1833. I do not mean to represent society as *openly* or *utterly* hostile to Christianity. I do not found my exhortations on any prevalent profligacy of manners. I do not deny that an important change has been made in our social character by Christian principles. On the contrary, I affirm this. I maintain, however, that this very improvement of the community — being as yet very partial, and rather on the surface than in the heart — is one of our perils, tending, as it does, to reconcile us to a *mediocrity* of virtue, and to blind us to the great evils with which society is yet deformed. I do not, then, feel myself called, in order to enforce my exhortation, to paint in dark and revolting characters the present state of the world. And that man must indeed be chargeable either with gross ignorance or gross prejudice, who does not see in Christian countries many happy influences of the Gospel. . . . . .

" Manners are softened, and the domestic relations hallowed, woman is rescued from degradation, and parental authority is changed from a harsh tyranny into affectionate control. Human suffering awakens new sympathy, and individual and associated efforts are continually diminishing its amount. War has parted with much of its cruelty, and the claims of a disarmed enemy are recognized. Even despotism, though it resists attempts to limit its power by constitutional barriers, is restrained by the spirit of society from its ancient excesses, and is laboring to improve the condition, education, and morals of its subjects. Here are glorious revolutions, and Christianity, were it to win no other victories, would deserve for these reforms the everlasting gratitude of the human race. But these are only superficial changes, compared with its great purpose. Its design is, to work more deeply, to guide and rouse men to the culture of that spiritual and universal charity which distinguished Christ; and this, however cherished in individuals, has not yet become the spirit of society, — has not yet cast down the strongholds of human selfishness and pride, and made the world a school, to the lessons and influences of which we may surrender ourselves without fear. . . . . .

"Am I asked in what respects the spirit of the world is opposed to that of Christian love? To answer this question fitly, I should set before you distinctly what I understand by Christian love or charity; but I can now only suggest two thoughts, which, indeed, are so intimately connected, as hardly to admit of division: — Christian love is founded on just and enlarged views of human nature; and, next, it is universal, and tends to embrace all mankind. . . . . .

"Christian benevolence is built on Christian views of human nature, and can rest on nothing else. This religion is distinguished by revealing man as a being with stronger claims on interest, sympathy, and benevolent concern than can well be conceived. We see in him the most striking and touching contrasts. We see in him the germs of all truth, virtue, and beautiful and generous affections, and stormy passions, lawless appetites, and insatiable desires. We see in him the child of God and the victim of sin, now manifesting the disinterested love of an angel, now betraying the pride, malignity, sensuality, of a demon. We see him *fallen* and *redeemed*, needing infinite compassion, and compassionated according to his need. Who can tell the worth of such a being? Who can count the treasures locked up in one human breast, or the amount of joys or woes for which every man is preparing? Men travel far to see the wonders of nature and of art. The greatest wonder is man himself. One soul is worth more than material worlds. Such is man as set before us in Christianity, and on these views Christian love is built.

" And need I ask you whether a love thus grounded and nourished is the spirit of society? Is it the habit of society to meditate on the great purposes for which each human being was framed? Has society yet learned man's relation to God, his powers, his perils, his immortality? Are these the thoughts which circulate in conversation, these the convictions which are brought home to you in your ordinary intercourse? Need I tell you how blind the multitude yet are to what is nearest them and concerns them most deeply, to their own nature, — how they overlook the spiritual in man, — how they stop at the outward and accidental, — how few penetrate to the soul and discern in that responsible, immortal being an object for unbounded solicitude and love? The multitude are living an outward life, discerning little but what meets the eye, valuing little but what can be weighed or measured by the senses, estimating one another by outward success, conflicting or coöperating with one another for outward interests. The consciousness of what is inward and spiritual and immortal, — how faintly does it stir in the multitude! Man's solemn, infinite connections with God and eternity are unacknowledged or forgotten, and so little are they comprehended, that, when urged on the conscience as realities, as motives to action and as foundations of love, they are dismissed as too unsubstantial or refined to exert a serious influence on life. Thus the spirit of society is virtually hostile to those great truths in regard to human nature on which Christian love is built, and without which we cannot steadfastly and disinterestedly bind ourselves to our race.

" I now pass to the second view of Christian love which I prepared to set before you, and which is intimately connected with the preceding. It is universal, or tends to embrace all the various orders and conditions of mankind.

Having its foundation and chief nutriment in just views of human nature, it cannot but comprehend all to whom this nature belongs. It is a love of man as *man*, as the spiritual and immortal child of God; and from this dignity no human being is excluded. It sees and feels how poor are all the outward distinctions of men in comparison with those powers and prospects which are the common property of the race. To the enlightened Christian, the barriers which divide men vanish. What is high birth, as it is called? To him, all men are born of God, are of heavenly parentage, and bearing the image of their Father. What is wealth? To the Christian, every man has infinite wealth within his reach,—the imperishable treasures of intelligence, conscience, affection, and moral strength, of faith, hope, charity,—and nothing seems more insane than to weigh against these silver and gold. Christian love bounds itself to none of this world's distinctions. It is not even repelled by crime. Enemies are not excluded from its concern, for they are still men, and share the mercy of a common Father.

"Thus universal, all-comprehending, is the love which springs from just views of man's nature and relation to God. And is this the spirit of society? Does society breathe and nurture this, or does it inculcate narrowness, exclusiveness, and indifference towards the great mass of mankind? Do we see in the world a prevalent respect for what all human beings partake? On the contrary, do not men attach themselves to what is peculiar, to what distinguishes one man from another, and especially to outward distinction; and is there not a tendency to overlook, as of little value, those who in these respects are depressed? Do they not worship the accidents, adventitious, unessential circumstances, of the human being,—birth, outward appearance, wealth, manner, rank, show,—and ground on these a consciousness of a superiority which divides them from others? Can we say of that distinction, which is alone important in the sight of God, which is confined to no condition, which is to outlive all the inequalities of life, and which, far from separating, binds those who possess it more and more to their race, — I mean moral and religious worth, — can we say of this, that it is the object of general homage, before whose commanding presence all lower differences among men are abased? The influence of outward condition in attracting or repelling men's sympathies and interest is one of the most striking features of modern society, and gives mournful proof of the faint hold which Christianity has as yet gained over the hearts and minds of men. Jesus deigned not to wear the outward distinctions of life, and chose for the highest office on earth, and as his intimate friends, those who wanted these; and his design was, that the sympathies and affections of his disciples should embrace all their fellow-creatures, unchecked by outward barriers, that man in every situation should be regarded with tenderness and respect. I do not say, that his design has wholly failed. Christianity is breaking down the walls which divide the children of God's great family; but how much of the work remains to be done! and who can deny, that, on the whole, the spirit of society is adverse to this enlarged, all-embracing spirit of Christ? . . . . .

"Such is the spirit of society. Christianity teaches us to feel ourselves members of the whole human family; society, to make or keep ourselves members of some favored caste. Christianity calls us to unite ourselves with others; society, to separate ourselves from them. Christianity teaches us to raise others; society, to rise above them. Christianity calls us to narrow the space between ourselves and our inferiors by communicating to them, as we have ability, what is most valuable in our own minds; society tells us to leave them to their degradation. Christianity summons us to employ superior ability, if such we have, as a means of wider and more beneficent action on the world; society suggests that these are a means of personal elevation. Christianity teaches us that what is peculiar in our lot or our acquisitions is of little worth in comparison with what we possess in common with our race; society teaches us to cling to what is peculiar as our highest honor and most precious possession. Fraternal union, sympathy, aid, is the spirit of Christianity; exclusiveness is the spirit of the world. And this spirit is not confined to what is called the highest class. It burns, perhaps, more intensely in those who are seeking than in those who occupy the eminences of social life. It is a disposition to undervalue those who want what we possess, to narrow our sympathies to one or another class, to forget the great bond of *humanity*. This spirit of exclusiveness triumphs over the spirit of Christianity, and, through its prevalence, the great work given to every human being, which is to improve his less favored fellow-being, is slighted. The sublime sphere of usefulness is little occupied. A spirit of rivalry, jealousy, envy, selfish competition, supplants the spirit of mutual interest, the respect, support, and aid, by which Christianity proposes to knit mankind into a *universal brotherhood*. . . . . .

"If we may trust the opinions of foreigners, the spirit of society in this country is peculiarly hostile to that of Christian love. They tell us, that, as a people, we are singularly restless and aspiring; that for the old aristocracy of birth we have substituted that of wealth; that every nerve is strained to accumulate, and by accumulation to scale the high places of society; that mammon has nowhere such fervent worshippers; that the intellect of the nation is contracted into a selfish shrewdness, and that the generous sentiments are absorbed in the spirit of calculation. We pronounce this false; but falsehood has often a foundation, however slight, in truth. In a country like ours, where industry is unshackled and the partition-walls of rank are easily cleared, where examples of brilliant success and sudden elevation appeal to the hopes of the multitude, where wealth is of easier acquisition and confers higher privileges than among any other people, we have reason to dread the prevalence of a self-seeking and self-elevating spirit, of a burning thirst for gain and distinction singularly hostile to the generous and all-comprehending benevolence of Jesus Christ."

Having thus learned the central principle of love, one in essence and universal in aim, that animated Dr. Channing as a reformer, and the uncompromising justice with which he condemned the pervading selfishness of modern society, while gratefully recognizing the humanity already infused by Christianity into legislation and manners, let us proceed to consider in what modes he brought his benevolence to bear upon particular evils.

The following paper, drawn up by him, will show the spirit which he desired to call out in his own society, and the direction which he sought to give to their energies.

"It being the duty of those who are favored with the Christian religion to promote, as they have ability, piety, good morals, and human happiness, we, the subscribers, members of the religious society in Federal street, agree to pay annually the sums annexed to our names, to be applied, by a committee chosen annually by ourselves, to the following objects, viz.: — 1. The provision of moral and religious instruction for the destitute in this town; 2. the publication of useful tracts; 3. the education of young men of suitable qualifications for the ministry, especially of any belonging to this society and needing pecuniary aid; 4. the support of missionaries in parts of the country destitute of a regular ministry; and 5. in general, the encouragement of any useful design which the benevolence of the age and the wants of the community may suggest.

"Among these designs the following may be named: — 1. The improvement of the poor, and the introduction of more economical and efficacious methods of teaching; 2. the investigation of the state of prisons, and the introduction of a moral treatment of criminals and of methods of relieving worthy but unfortunate debtors; 3. the purification of parts of the town notoriously corrupt; 4. the suppression of intemperance and kindred vices; 5. the employment of the poor, the removal of abuses by which they are involved in litigation, the introduction among them of economical improvements, and, in general, the extension of just ideas as to the best methods of relieving and preventing poverty; 6. the improvement of particular classes of men, whose occupations are found to be peculiarly unfavorable to good morals and religion.

"The committee, availing itself of the service of individuals in the society who have leisure and benevolence, and by directing a continued attention to one or more of these objects, according to the number and dispositions of their associates, may, it is believed, produce important results, and convert into realities what are now only the wishes and suggestions of philanthropy."

An "Association of the Members of the Federal Street Society for Benevolent Purposes" was also formed, June 6th, 1824, which continued its operations for ten years, contributing generously to various charitable enterprises, encouraging Sunday schools, missions, and the ministry at large, and supporting students at the Divinity School.

Besides these efforts within his own society, Dr. Channing coöperated, so far as health and time allowed, with the deservedly honored "Wednesday Evening Association," sometimes called the "Beneficent Association," which was the mother of so many wise and generous plans of moral and social improvement. Its first meeting was held at his house, in February, 1822, and for many years it carried on a series of thorough investigations and quiet but efficient reforms, which were greatly instrumental in giving to Boston its peculiar character of philanthropic earnestness. The leading objects of this society were, — "1. To extend the knowledge of true religion, and to advance its practical influence; 2. to promote any plans of a public nature for improving the condition of society; 3. to produce a unity of purpose and effort among Unitarian Christians." Under date of May 17th, 1826, it is recorded among the proceedings of the Association, that "Dr. Channing made an address on the expediency and practicability of procuring for the poor of the city a preacher, who should associate with himself as instructers intelligent laymen," &c. The subject of suitable habitations for the poor was at the same time brought forward, and thenceforth frequently considered, until finally was originated Dr. Tuckerman's "Ministry at Large." How deep and constant was Dr. Channing's interest in the plans of his fervent and devoted friend will hereafter fully appear. His thoughts were continually becoming concentrated more and more upon the terrible problem of Pauperism, before which the benevolence of all civilized states stands paralyzed and aghast; and he saw more clearly each year that what the times demanded was that the axe should be laid at the very root of ignorance, temptation, and strife, by substituting for the present unjust and unequal distribution of the privileges of life some system of cordial, respectful, brotherly coöperation.

But before presenting his views on this fundamental reform, from which alone can truly efficient charity grow up, let us first trace the course of his opinions in relation to various benevolent movements.

We have seen, at an earlier period, how strong was Dr. Channing's desire to advance the triumph of Peace over the custom of War, which Barbarism has left in disastrous legacy to Civilization ; and on every suitable occasion, through his whole life, he sought with increasing zeal to cultivate a spirit of humane policy, which might banish from among Christian states this hoary crime, that has so long preyed on their prosperity and virtue. Though thus opposed to war, however, he could not see that the principle of *Non-Resistance* was a right one, either between individuals or nations. His objections to the "ultra" peace doctrine are thus stated by himself.

"*September* 9, 1829.* I received and have read with much pleasure the book you sent me on the 'Unlawfulness of War.' You ask my opinion on this subject. I agree with your author in every thing but the *main point.* I abhor war as much as he does, but the view of its 'absolute unlawfulness' I cannot accede to. I think my opinion of some weight, because my feelings carry me strongly to this doctrine, and nothing, it seems to me, but the power of truth prevents my joining the most rigid interpreters of the Christian precepts which relate to this subject. I think the author has erred fundamentally in supposing that we have nothing to do but to obey the laws of Christianity without reasoning about them, or that our religion prescribes particular acts or courses which we are to follow without a thought of consequences. Christianity does any thing but lay down a precise law, telling us where to plant every footstep, and giving such plain prescriptions that we need only hear the words to receive their full significance immediately. Its laws are given in bold and sometimes hyperbolical language, and require the constant exercise of good sense and reason to determine their precise import. Above all, they enjoin a spirit, or inward principle, leaving us very much to our own discretion as to the mode of applying it. The precept, ‘Resist not evil,’ is plainly to be understood with much limitation, for, were it literally followed, without exception, by the private individual and magistrate, all government, domestic and civil, would cease, and society would fall a prey to its worst members. The precept was not intended to forbid all resistance, but to forbid the *bad passions* from which resistance generally springs. A discipline of the heart is enjoined, not any outward course. Christianity is intended to raise us to universal, unbounded love, and the only question is, whether war is inconsistent with this spirit. You may say it is. You may ask, How can I turn against one whom I sincerely love instruments of death? I answer, it is very possible to possess a sincere regard for the happiness of another being, sympathize strongly with his sufferings, and yet to subject him to severe suffering, and even to death. How often does the judge pass sentence on a criminal for whom he feels deeply! I am to love the bad man; but I am also to love society, to love my family, my friends, my country; and if the bad man arm himself for the ruin of these, I am bound to repel him. In so doing, do I not act from a principle of charity, especially if to save the good, to defend the community, I expose my own life in resisting the bad? I can certainly oppose a wicked man's purposes, and in so doing can inflict on him severe pain, without hating him, and even with the deepest grief for his character and punishment. I may even feel, through the strength of my philanthropy, a severer pain than I inflict. War, then, is not necessarily inconsistent with the spirit of Christian love. On the contrary, I fear that I should want this love, were I to look quietly and unresistingly on the undisguised efforts of unprincipled men to spoil and enslave my country, my children, — all who are especially confided to my care. War, then, is not absolutely, or in all possible cases, a crime. Here I dissent from your author.

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* To Miss Jane E. Roscoe, Liverpool.

"But practically I should go almost as far as he would. The whole system of war, as it now exists, is abominable. The profession of a soldier, according to this system, is immoral, and most actual wars are unjust; so that a philanthropist and Christian should die sooner than engage in them. These views, I think, if wisely expounded, would go much farther towards the suppression of war than the doctrine of its absolute unlawfulness.

"I know it is objected, that, if any war is allowed to be just, all will be found so; that no lines can be drawn between the lawful and unlawful. So the fanatic says no line can be drawn between innocent indulgence and luxury, between moderate and excessive ornament, and therefore all indulgence and ornament must be renounced. I do not believe in the wisdom or virtue of escaping the labor and responsibility of moral discrimination by flying to an extreme principle. Every moral question is as open to this objection as war. Perhaps a sound mind can make the right distinctions on war as easily as on most of the solemn concerns of life. I cannot, however, explain myself now."

But though inclined to fear that the earnest band of Non-Resistants, who were then firmly applying the principle of perfect and perpetual peace to all the relations of individuals and states, would rather retard than hasten the growth of sound feeling in the public heart, and thus compelled in justice to stand aloof from, and even by discriminating statements to oppose, a body of reformers whom as individuals he profoundly respected, Dr. Channing was still less disposed to coöperate with those over-prudent peace-men, who, loud and zealous in hours of tranquillity, are unseen and unheard in times of peril. The moral intrepidity, which prompted him in early manhood to condemn from the pulpit the war of 1812, had only gained vigor through years of observation and experience ; and no considerations of expediency or caution made him hesitate for an instant to reprove the popular madness, when unscrupulous politicians hurried this nation to the brink of hostilities for a paltry indemnity and a strip of land. In 1835, though the Executive of the United States advised war with France, and many eloquent men in Congress advocated violent measures, Dr. Channing appeared before his people in a discourse, that was afterwards printed, in which he exposed with sublime sincerity the deadness of the national conscience to the claims of humanity and the true honor of states.* And again in 1838 and 1839,—though leading statesmen, and influential papers, and guides of opinion in commercial and social circles reluctantly yielded to the seeming necessity of a struggle with England,—in a lecture on war, which, when published, was prefaced with a few pages of most plain and pungent appeal, he indignantly exposed the abominable horrors and gratuitous wickedness of this infernal usage.† The following letters will show how, also, through private channels, he endeavoured to exert his influence for the preservation of peace.

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* Works, Vol. IV. pp. 237-263.

† Ibid. Vol. V. pp. 109-147.

"*Boston*, December 5, 1835.* You have borne your testimony against war very strongly. Ought not Christians to speak on this subject as they have never done before? At the present moment we are threatened with war for a punctilio, a matter of etiquette. All the crimes and miseries of war are to be encountered for nothing, and yet the public press utters not a word on our obligations as a Christian community. The politicians have the whole affair in their hands. The Christians among us sit still and silent, and leave worldly, self-seeking politicians to decide whether they shall imbrue their hands in the blood of their brethren. Is Christianity always to remain a dead letter in the determination of national concerns, and especially of peace and war? I wish you would revolve this subject in your mind."

"*Boston*, February 17, 1836.† We may hope that this exposition will not be lost. Many, I am assured, have received such impressions from the work as we should desire. We shall neither of us probably live to see the accomplishment of this and other benevolent objects in which we have been engaged, but we must be grateful if we can do any thing to advance them. You, I am sure, have not labored in vain. You must have been gratified with seeing the great disinclination of the community to second the recent war movements of the President. Undoubtedly, wise or prudential considerations had a large share in producing this reluctance; but I believe an important effect was produced by more Christian and moral views of war, and by the diffusion of juster views of military glory. Undoubtedly, much, very much, remains to be done. The spirit of nations and of the multitude is not the spirit of Christ. But is not the true relation of man to man better understood? Is it not felt, that to butcher God's children, our spiritual brethren, is a fearful crime? I do not despair of the power of truth, because the victory is not immediately won, because we, creatures of a day, do not witness the utter prostration of long established errors and corruptions. It is a privilege to witness silent changes, and this happiness is not denied us. It is my earnest desire, that your last days may be cheered by brighter hopes and a stronger faith. Accept the assurances of the sincere respect of your friend."

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* To Francis Wayland, D. D.

† To Noah Worcester, D. D.

"*Boston*, March 7, 1841.* I have received your 'resolutions' on the subject of war, and I should be unjust to my feelings, if I did not thank you for them in the strongest manner. It is very cheering to find that a man may breathe the atmosphere of a legislative chamber and escape its deadly influence. You will be told, I doubt not, of the futility of all such movements, but I trust you will not be discouraged. There is at this moment in our community a disposition to apply great principles to practice, to realize moral and religious ideas, such as never existed before. It works silently where it is little suspected, and is repressed chiefly by the fear of finding no sympathy. On this account I attach much importance to the strong expression of great principles by men in public life.

"In regard to your first resolution, it has often occurred to me, that non-intercourse might and should be substituted for war; but the question arises, whether in the present state of the world it can be carried out. The merchants of both countries would, to a man, employ all their ingenuity in eluding it; and would not an indirect intercourse be established, which would make the policy of the government a mere name? I know too little of trade to judge of the validity of this objection; but it is the only one which occurs to me, and I should hope that a government resolved on enforcing non-intercourse might do it.

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* To John L. O'Sullivan, Esq.

"I have much faith in the pacific system *cordially* adopted by a nation. A nation speaking in a voice of true good-will and philanthropy, shrinking from war, not through fear or interested motives, but from reverence for justice and Christian love, and appealing to the world against wrong, would not speak in vain. But a vast change is first to be wrought, before such a voice can go forth from any community. I pray God that you may help to bring on this better age.

"The objections of my friend Dr. Follen to a congress of nations, published in the Democratic Review, seem to me strong. The essential idea which we wish to establish is *Arbitration.* The mode is unimportant, if we can but secure impartiality."

It is scarcely necessary to say, that Dr. Channing felt the strongest detestation for that remnant of antiquated inhumanity called duelling; but as a scandalous occurrence in his own community called forth a slight expression of his feelings on the subject, it may be well here to record it.

"I have been much shocked within a few days by the want of Christian feeling on the subject of *duelling* here. A Christian community, instructed as ours is in the benevolent principles of our religion, ought to have spoken with an authority and a severity of rebuke which would teach the young and unprincipled, that this outrage on our institutions, faith, and manners cannot be endured. I see in this case how little the sublimity and beauty of the spirit of Christ are felt. Even those who oppose duelling rest too much on mere authority, and not on its hostility to all the principles which ennoble the soul. This is in a discouraging tone, and yet I am not discouraged. The more I see of evil, the more I am assured of the power which is to triumph over it.

We are low enough, I feel, and yet we have risen in comparison with the past."

Closely connected with his views of the lawfulness and unlawfulness of the exercise of force, as an instrument of justice between nation and nation, were Dr. Channing's opinions in regard to legal restraints and penalties, as a means of internal policy. He looked with warm and eager sympathy upon every attempt to reform the cruel abuses which have so long disgraced the dens where Christians have pent up their erring brethren to fester in their crimes, and was ready to assert, with the noble-hearted Roscoe, "that beneficence, and not revenge, should be the motive of all criminal proceedings," and that "prisons cannot be conducted upon opposite and discordant principles, but must be either places of vindictive and exemplary punishment, or places of instruction, industry, and reform."* The following letters will show the gradual development of his faith in the mighty power of humane treatment to lift up the most debased and brutal to the full stature of man.

"*October* 28, 1825.† I wish, through you, to thank your father for his last publication on 'Penal Jurisprudence.' I have intended for some time to answer his kind letter, but have waited in hope of being able to give more attention to the subject in which his benevolence is so deeply engaged. I incline much to his views of punishment, but do not hold them with that strength of conviction which would give me courage to act upon them were I a legislator.

"My compassion towards criminals generally prevails over my indignation. When I consider how closely the whole community is bound together, how all the parts act upon one another, how the poorer classes depend on the higher, and catch from them the infection of vice, and how large a share of the guilt of every crime belongs to society, which has exposed the offender to temptation without giving him moral strength or means of defence, I wonder with what face any man can denounce vengeance, and vengeance only, upon criminals. Punishment, I suppose, will correspond with the character of the community, and will grow mild as manners soften. In an iron age it will be cruel. In proportion as the spirit of Christianity is understood and felt, it will become an instrument of reform. I rejoice that your father is provoking discussion, and doubt not, that, however some of his views may be questioned, he will lead many to feel more than they have done that they have a common nature with the unhappy convict, and are bound to labor for his restoration."

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* Manuscript letter of Wm. Roscoe, Esq., to Dr. Channing, 1825.

† To Miss Jane E. Roscoe.

"*November* 30, 1828.* Can legislation do much towards reforming men? Has not the power of government in this, as in every thing, been overrated? Can associations do much? Is it not by individual interest, by unaffected individual friendship, by teaching from the lips of philanthropy, and not by official acts, that the offender is to be brought to feel what he is and especially what he may be?

"According to these views, a great object of a prison should be to bring the prisoner within the influence of enlightened and good minds; and until such minds are formed, until individuals rise up, who, instead of acting in societies, will cultivate personal intercourse with the individual prisoner, are we to expect reformation? The prisoner must see himself to be an object of interest, and must see that his nature is still respected, that there are those who hope well and highly for him, or the redeeming principle will not be awakened in him. That we shall arrive at this state of things by and by I doubt not. The barbarous separation made between society and the criminal is not — what we are too apt to call it — a relic of barbarous times, but a part of a barbarous system *now* in being; and it must give way just as far as the light of truth and Christian virtue penetrates the darkness which still hangs over us."

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* To Miss Jane E. Roscoe.

"*Boston*, March 30, 1829.* I am glad that your father sees ground of hope in the views of prison discipline which are gaining ground in this country. I should prefer, were it practicable, a system which would separate the prisoners wholly from one another, and at the same time give them work and other society. Their old connections should be wholly broken off. They should have no communion with one another. This is one step toward reformation. Remove the offender from bad influences.

"But you will say, Do I defend solitary confinement? No. Whilst I wish bad influences to be cut off, I wish good ones to be brought to bear on the criminal. The vicious are to be raised by the help of the virtuous. I would have the enlightened and virtuous brought into connection with the guilty. The good must feel that their goodness is imparted to them to be imparted to others. Those who have been preserved from great crime must not think of themselves as raised by this purity above the vicious, but as thus preserved that they may restore the fallen. *The influence of the enlightened and pure* on the criminal seems to me an essential element of a system for the reformation of offenders. I would have a few trustworthy individuals interested in a prisoner, taught to look upon him as their charge, accustomed to visit and talk to him as a friend, and to encourage his work; and expected to make provision for him, on his leaving prison, that is, to find him a field of virtuous industry.

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* To Miss Jane E. Roscoe.

"We are not, perhaps, good enough for this system, but we must grow up to it; and until the good take this immediate, active interest in the improvement of the offender, the surest means will be untried. A chaplain would answer my purpose very imperfectly. I want not an official, but a friendly connection."

"*Philadelphia*, April 10, 1832. Yesterday I almost exhausted myself in a very interesting visit to the Penitentiary, a very noble establishment. I was allowed — which is not a common privilege — to enter the cells and talk with the prisoners. I saw four, I think, who had committed murder in the second degree. They and all the prisoners are confined in solitary cells, and seldom see any countenance but that of the keeper. The system is thought by some to be too severe, as human nature shrinks from nothing so much as from this utter loneliness, and many have feared that the spirit would be broken and the understanding palsied. I think that terrible effects might follow, if the poor secluded beings were not allowed to work. Work which men at large are apt to think hard is to them more than recreation. It saves them from a fate worse than death. I found that their minds were bright and active, and that they seemed desirous to make a good use of their discipline. I endeavoured to make them feel that society was punishing them, not from revenge, but kindness, and that Providence was most merciful in putting this check on their crimes. We must never lead the most wicked to look on their condition as desperate. They are still our brethren; and if we can once persuade them of our sincere interest in them, we do something, perhaps much, for their recovery. I am not rested yet from this visit."

"*Philadelphia*, April 17, 1832.* If you have not already visited the Penitentiary here, I know no place so worthy your attention. I visited this institution a few days ago, and was very much disposed to regard it as the greatest advance yet made in prison discipline. The discretionary power of punishing given to the warden on the Auburn system, and which I dread and abhor, is altogether unnecessary here, and, indeed, no punishment but the occasional withholding of a meal is resorted to. I talked with the prisoners as long as I had power, to ascertain the influence of the system of seclusion on the intellect and the moral character; and my fears as to its stupefying effect seemed to be wholly groundless. I intend to see the attending physician on this subject. The only bad influence which I saw came from the preaching and religious tracts. I think two of the prisoners were bewildered by what they had heard of the sinner's inability to change his heart. Truly this plague of Calvinism, like the vermin inflicted on Egypt, finds its way everywhere. I pitied the poor creatures, when I found their cells furnished with tracts of the common sort.

"My great desire has been to connect prisoners with intelligent and religious people, two of whom should have the intellectual and moral care of each convict; but when I think into what hands this care would fall, I have some misgivings. However, the good would prevail. The sympathies of human nature are too strong for the spirit of theological systems."

Chief among the temptations of modern society which seduced men into crime, Dr. Channing recognized intemperance. In common with all deep observers, he believed that the existing generation of civilized states is peculiarly subject to this vice, from the combined effects of extreme nervous development, — of restlessness and anxiety engendered from worldly competition, — of exhaustion produced by excessive and monotonous toil, — of defective social, intellectual, and physical excitements, — and, finally, of the depressing influence of general culture, contrasted with tantalizing inequalities of condition. With his habitual love of individual freedom, and his excessive dread of the tyranny incident to associated action, he refrained, indeed, from joining the temperance societies, and never adopted or advised others to adopt their pledges. But by precept and example he lent the full weight of his influence to the temperance reform, and, by addresses to his people and to the public, endeavoured to unite all classes in a grand coöperative movement to put out, once and for ever, the wasting fire that was eating up forest and prairie, cornfield and garden, the scattered village and the crowded city. The frankness and thoroughness with which he discussed the causes and cures of this terrible evil may be best learned from the address delivered in 1837 before the Massachusetts Temperance Society.* But one or two passages selected from his manuscripts give interesting suggestions as to practical methods of advancing this reform; and from the last of these it will appear that he had anticipated, at least in hope, the sublime Washingtonian movement, which has wrought throughout our land such miracles of love.

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* To Joseph Tuckerman, D. D.

1825. "In the spirit of these remarks, I beg to suggest a few means of preventing intemperance in the community.

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* Works, Vol. II., pp. 301-346.

One means seems to me to be a greater attention to physical education, to the production of a vigorous constitution in our children. There is a puny, half-healthy, half-diseased condition of the body, perhaps more common in this country than in many others, which, by producing irritableness and restlessness, and weakening the energy of the will, is a strong temptation to the free use of stimulants, and many, I firmly believe, become sots through bodily infirmity. Physical vigor is not only valuable for its own sake, but it favors temperance, and all the virtues, by producing clearness and soundness of intellect, and by removing those indescribable feelings of sinking, disquiet, depression, which no man who has not felt them can possibly understand. Physical education needs more attention. The intellect, indeed, calls for chief care; but the mind is now lodged in matter, and acts through organs, and suffers and pines with them. A child owes little gratitude to the parent who gives him knowledge at the expense of health. Beware of sacrificing the body to the intellect, for they are intended to be friends and joint workers. Whilst you give your children languages and science and literature, strive to give too that strength of muscle which will enable them to turn these acquisitions to account. Let them not, in their first years, be instructed, as is too common, in close, unventilated rooms, breathing a tainted, unhealthy air, and let them not, at a later period, give up exercise for study. The body cannot be neglected with impunity; bad temper, discontent, and intemperance follow in the train of nervous debility.

"Another means of preventing intemperance I suggest with diffidence, because I necessarily want opportunities of observation to justify a decided opinion. I offer it, however, to the attention of the more experienced. I have thought that one check to intemperance might be found in adapting labor more carefully than at present to human strength. In other words, I fear that not a few exhaust their system by overworking it, and such exhaustion is one of the strongest temptations to intemperance. I am well aware that in some employments men suffer from insufficient and irregular labor; but in a period like the present, of overflowing enterprise, I apprehend there is danger of injuring more by efforts disproportioned to the resources of the body. A few years ago, a man venerable by age and wisdom observed, that, in consequence of the more stimulating modes of living now prevalent, laborers accomplish more in a day, by a third or a quarter, than was effected when he was young. I am told, too, that contractors among us give spirit to their workmen from calculation, as a method of obtaining more labor than could otherwise be gained. Now in this case it is not the mere giving of spirit largely and regularly which produces intemperance. My impression is, that the human system cannot afford a greater expenditure of strength than it can make without stimulus. The labor drawn from it by spirit is a strain upon it, and silently breaks down the constitution, and, what is worse, the exhaustion in which it ends creates an almost irresistible craving for new stimulants, and hence the money gained by undue toil is spent in repairing the wasted energies.

"Is it not possible to frame a wise and benevolent estimate of what the human frame in ordinary circumstances can accomplish, without injury to health, and to make that the standard of exaction? Adam Smith observes, that a man who labors moderately and regularly will, in the end, yield more service to the community than another, who is overtasked, and who, as he says, will seek a solace in dissipation. I cannot help hoping that in one particular the new plan for improving society, which has just been imported into our country, and is to be tried in the West, will prove successful. I refer to the principle, that man, by a wise direction of liberty, may accomplish the proper work of a day in less time and with less exhaustion than at present, and may be aided to fill up the remaining time in a manner worthy of intellectual, social, and moral beings. I do trust that society is tending to a state in which the present inequality of condition will be diminished, — in which the mass of men, instead of being little more than beasts of burden, instead of spending life and quenching the mind in almost incessant toil for the perishing body, will become conscious of their spiritual nature and divine faculties, and enjoy more and more liberally the means of development.

"I am naturally led by these remarks to another means of checking intemperance, which is, to extend the means of intellectual improvement among the laboring classes of society. This alone will not make men temperate, but it is an important aid. Many fall into drunkenness from want of interesting objects. Conceive of the number of young men in this town, who, unaccustomed to find a companion in a book, and having never given themselves to the culture or pleasures of intellect, have hardly any method of filling up the evening but by haunting public places, and taking up with such society as they can find. It is probably known to most of you, that in England, the mother of good inventions, exertions are now used, and with great success, to give to the laboring classes a degree of scientific knowledge of which they were once thought incapable, and which prepares them to follow their various trades more intelligently, and the intention is to add instruction in history, political economy, morals, so that a laborer may soon know more than most gentlemen know at present. Now this is a most refreshing prospect. It is a resurrection of mind. And the good has begun in this country, in Philadelphia; and we may confidently hope that the mental vigor, foresight, self-respect, and innocent occupation gained by this process will snatch many a victim from intemperance."

1833 "In a state of society so essentially free as ours, let us not expect too much from coercive measures. Nothing but despotism can carry them into full operation; and even were they stretched ever so far, they would rather lop off the branches, than lay the axe at the root of the evil. The evil lies too deep in our nature, and in the state of society, to be extirpated by summary application of force. In regard to this, as to many other vices, perhaps, the error of past times has been, that men have combated them too much by restraint, and terror, and compulsion, which work only superficially, and, however useful in preventing the outbreakings of evil, do not reach its source. I believe that the best way to correct human nature is, not to hem it in by prison walls, but to treat it generously, to call into free action all its powers of body and mind, of intellect and conscience, of thought and feeling, to give it wide scope and the fullest development. Multiply in society the influences under which the body and mind will grow and strengthen, and all the physical, intellectual, and moral capacities will find room and nutriment, and vice, which is but another name for a partial development of human nature, an excess of one principle at the expense of the rest, will, of itself, disappear and die."

1833. "The chief objection to this reform seems to me to be this, that its leaders and friends have allowed themselves to speak despairingly of the recovery of those who have enslaved themselves to intemperance, and that, in their zeal to arrest this pestilence, to prevent its seizing on new subjects, they have thought too little of those who have already fallen under its power. In this respect, they need to be reminded of Him who came to seek and save the *lost*. We cannot be too slow to despair of a fellow-creature.

"It may be that the very circumstance which makes intemperance so obstinate gives encouragement to labor for its cure. This vice is confirmed by nothing so much as by the disease which it generates in the animal frame. It has its seat in the body as truly as in the mind, — in the derangement of physical functions as much as in weakness or poverty of will. Accordingly I cannot but hope that asylums, or establishments in which a wise physical treatment should be combined with moral means, would do much for the salvation of this unhappy class of our fellow-creatures.

"There is one powerful motive for these efforts. The reformation of the intemperate man, when it does take place, is more complete than that of any other class of offenders. A man who has given himself up to revenge, pride, envy, anger, dishonesty, debauchery, is seldom, if ever, totally reformed. These vices get possession of the imagination, twine themselves into the common trains of thought, and act so subtly and deeply, that he who has once been their slave perhaps never, in this life, escapes wholly their influence. But examples are not rare of the drunkard becoming *wholly temperate*, and, what is very cheering, such a man, when reformed, returns to the generous feelings, the domestic affections, the innocent and refined tastes, and very often to the intellectual energy, which he seemed to have lost. I have seen among men reclaimed from this vice bright examples of moral worth and intellectual power. Intemperance, if cured rarely, yet admits of perfect cure; and this is more than can be said of the malignant and selfish vices. You can receive to your friendship and confidence a man reclaimed from intemperance. You never can trust entirely a man who has been given up to dishonesty, however he may seem to forsake his evil path. In like manner, a habit of lewdness leaves behind it a taint of grossness, pollution, from which the thoughts and imagination are never, perhaps, in this life, wholly cleansed. This advantage on the side of intemperance is owing, I believe, to the circumstance of its being a bodily even more than a moral or mental disease; and this view, whilst it diminishes its guilt, should encourage us to use every means of rescuing its victims from its power.

"The temperance reform which is going on among us deserves all praise, and I see not what is to hinder its complete success. If, indeed, this reformation stood alone, or if it rested only on the efforts of associations, I should have little hope of its continuance. No particular vice can be reformed alone; unless a general improvement go on in society, the attempt to root up this or that evil will avail little. The seeds of the evil will be left, and the general corruption will afford them the very soil in which to thrive, and they will certainly shoot up into rank luxuriance as soon as the effort for repressing them shall be slackened by time. In regard to intemperance, I believe the movements now made will succeed, because they are in harmony with and are seconded by the general spirit and progress of the age. Every advance in knowledge, in refined manners, in domestic enjoyments, in habits of foresight and economy, in regular industry, in the comforts of life, in civilization, good morals, and religion, is an aid to the cause of temperance; and believing, as we do, that these are making progress, may we not hope that drunkenness will be driven from society?"

Dr. Channing was not only desirous of surrounding the criminal and the intemperate with a genial atmosphere of respectful kindness, which might cause the sap to mount once more in the dry boughs and the frost-bound buds to swell and bloom, but he was yet more anxious that society at large should be pervaded with such a spirit of good-will and justice as would save men from temptation to debasement. He saw that no work of substantial, sure, progressive reform could be effected in the community without establishing new relations between the more privileged classes and their less fortunate fellow-beings. He saw that no persevering, combined, faithful efforts were made to surround the vicious with good influences, but that they were left for the most part to herd together and to corrupt each other amidst destitution and moral and mental darkness. What was needed first of all, he thought, was, that the partition-walls of classes and ranks should be broken down, so that the highest might meet the lowest as brethren, and a constant circulation of intelligence and virtue be kept up between the cultivated and ignorant, the pure and the unrefined, the wretched and the prosperous, the care-worn and the happy. He was convinced that all true charity must be directed not so much to the relief as to the removal of pauperism, that foul common sewer of civilization, from whose abominations steam up innumerable moral infections. These views led him to give his time and thoughts, his sympathy and counsel, and, in every way which feeble health permitted, his most earnest coöperation, to his friend Dr. Tuckerman, in establishing the Ministry at Large. His correspondence upon this subject will open to us the writer's central principles and most cherished hopes in relation to Social Reform.

"If you can succeed in awakening in the more opulent and improved class an enlightened and active concern for the moral and religious improvement of their less favored brethren, will you not accomplish a greater good than by any other labors, and will you not afford at the same time the best illustration of the true spirit of Unitarian Christianity?

"*We* are distinguished by believing that Christ benefits and saves men exclusively by a moral influence, and that the true follower of Christ is he who is ready to live and die in the work of elevating the human soul, and especially of raising the most fallen. Is there any distinction which we are so desirous to communicate to our liberal fellow-Christians as this moral interest in mankind? And have you not encouragement to labor, that this may become a striking characteristic of the body whom, in a sense, you represent, as well as that it should be spread more and more through the whole community? It seems to me, that we understand better than most Christians that it is the object of our religion to establish a fraternal union among all classes of society, to break down our present distinctions, and to direct all the energies of the cultivated and virtuous to the work of elevating the depressed classes to an enlightened piety, to intellectual and moral dignity. To us, it seems to me, this great work peculiarly belongs. This high mission is given, because we understand better the worth of human nature in all classes, and are prepared to act on all with that sentiment of respect which is essential to success.

" I am particularly desirous that we should engage in this cause with a new spirit. I desire this, not only on the general grounds above stated, but for two reasons in particular.

" First, it seems to me that the signs of the times point to *a great approaching modification of society*, which will be founded on and will express the essential truth, that the chief end of the social state is the elevation of all its members as intelligent and moral beings, and under which every man will be expected to contribute to this object according to his ability. The present selfish, dissocial system must give way to Christianity, and I earnestly wish that we may bear our full part in effecting this best of all revolutions.

" In the second place, the time is come when religious bodies will be estimated by *the good they do*, when creeds are to be less and less the test of the Christian, and when they who labor most effectually for their fellow-beings will be acknowledged to give the best proof of having found the truth. This is no reason for making forced, unnatural, sectarian efforts, and baptizing them with the name of philanthropy; but it is a reason why a body of Christians, distinguished by holding the true doctrine of love, and by understanding the true bond of society, should do most for their fellow-beings. . . . . . I wish that this may be an object in your tracts. I would ask, whether this object may not be distinctly recognized in the constitution of all auxiliary societies, and whether, indeed, it may not be made the leading trait of a Unitarian, that he is a man who sympathizes with and respects the less favored classes of society, and that he is pledged to use all his powers for their elevation. I am sure, that, just in proportion as this spirit shall be spread among us, modes of operation, little thought of at present, will open upon us, and a new era of Christian exertion will commence.

"It is an important question, what sphere of useful action is particularly commended to us as Unitarians. We do not feel ourselves called to missionary labors. We find no sufficient field in societies which are instituted to remove particular evils, such as intemperance, slavery, war, &c. Is there no work to which our peculiar views call us, and for which they fit us? The success which has attended Dr. Tuckerman's labors, and the good which he has done to our body by awakening a fraternal sentiment towards all men, seem to me to furnish one answer to these questions. We ought to be by eminence CHRISTIAN PHILANTHROPISTS." *

"*Newport*, *R. I.*, August 12, 1833. My great desire is, not so much that the ministry for the poor should be made permanent, as that the spirit in which Dr. Tuckerman conducted his ministry should be fervently cherished and spread through our class and every class of Christians. He was distinguished by recognizing the capacities and claims of the poor as intellectual and moral beings. He did not go among them to teach them submission to their betters, but to teach that they were equally objects of the Divine love with the greatest of their race, and that their condition contained the means of the true happiness and glory of human beings. His reports were all fitted to give the poor a different place in the minds of the rich, and to break down the barriers which have hitherto separated these classes of society. What I desire is, that this respect for the poor, this spirit of brotherhood, this consciousness of the near relation sustained by all human beings to the Infinite Father, should be cherished and diffused among us with persevering and increasing zeal.

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* To a committee of the Unitarian Association, appointed to consider and report upon the Ministry at Large.

" The distinction which is still made in society by wealth is, perhaps, the strongest proof which can be named of the very limited efficacy of the Gospel. Who, that looks on Christian communities, would suspect that their Divine Teacher had pronounced a blessing on the poor, and solemnly and most emphatically declared opulence to be one of the chief obstructions of human virtue and salvation? Who would suspect that he himself lived in poverty, and chose the chief and most illustrious ministers of his kingdom among the poor? Is it not undeniable, that the Christian spirit of humanity, of brotherhood, is resisted and repressed more by the prevalent estimate of wealth than by almost any other cause? What I wish is, not only that a ministry may be established for the poor, but that it should spring from and should spread Christ's spirit toward the poor, — that we should learn to look on and aid them, not as an inferior class, but as our brethren, — that this ministry should aim chiefly to give them true elevation of mind, to remove the idea of degradation from their outward lot, to teach them the reality of their immortal nature and its infinite preciousness in the sight of God, to teach them to regard and use their very sufferings as the means of rising to peculiar virtue, moral energy, and happiness. No outward lot is degraded but that into which men fall by vice, and on this principle affluence is as often a degraded condition as poverty, for as many grow rich as grow poor by guilt. The superiority of human nature, of that nature in which the high and low, rich and poor, alike partake, to all outward, adventitious distinctions is the foundation on which Christian exertion rests; and piety and philanthropy cannot advance a step but by a more profound and enlightened conviction of this truth. Happy that body of Christians which shall be characterized by this conviction!

" It has often been objected to our views of Christianity, that they are suited to the educated, rich, fashionable, and not to the wants of the great mass of human beings. This charge, could it be substantiated, would be a weightier argument against them than all others. We know it to be false; and yet why has it been urged? I do fear, that, as a body of Christians, we have given some ground for it, by having failed in so great a degree to recognize and manifest the distinguishing and celestial spirit of Christianity, the spirit of universal, all-comprehending love, of sincere respect for human nature, of peculiar sympathy with the destitute and exposed, and of patient, earnest labor for their spiritual elevation. Wanting this, we have had no effectual means of interesting the mass of mankind. Other systems have found in terror, mystery, &c., the means of taking hold of the multitude. These we have justly rejected. But the true method of reaching human beings in every condition, that is, the manifestation of a brotherly concern for the multitude of men, the cordial recognition of our near connection with them as immortal children of our Heavenly Father, the acknowledgment of this bond as dearer, nobler, than any connection with the great and distinguished of this world, the expression of a strong faith in the capacities of indefinite improvement in every soul, the utterance of this faith and love in the native language of the heart, — this means of operating on the minds of men, which would prove all-powerful, we have very faintly used. How could we use it, when the spirit of Christ has been so faint in us? The prejudices of society, amidst which we were born and grew up, joined to our own ambition and selfishness, have cut us off from our fellow-creatures. Is it strange, then, that it should be said, that our views are not suited to their wants, and cannot interest them?

" These remarks will show what seems to me the first step towards spreading through our body the spirit which breathed through Dr. Tuckerman's ministry, and which should originate and pervade this ministry everywhere. It is this. They whose office it is to spread this spirit must possess it themselves, must cherish it in their own breasts. The great obstacle to success is the want of fit ministers for the work, of men who have a true faith in the great purposes for which the poorest and the lowest of men were made, and who love them as brethren.

" Another means is this. Preaching should more and more hold forth Christianity as a spirit of universal brotherly love, as intended to awaken a moral, spiritual interest in mankind, and to unite all its disciples in efforts for the restoration of the most fallen. This feature of our religion should be more and more prominent in preaching. Indeed, this spirit should be inculcated as the highest manifestation of the religious principle, as the truest worship of God.

" Again. The inculcation of this spirit of Christ should be a leading object in your tracts. Not that controversial tracts should be discontinued; these are of great importance. I only wish that every doctrine which we defend might be shown to be adapted to promote this spirit, as well as the whole of practical piety.

"Again. Preaching should be more adapted among us to the wants and capacities of the uneducated and poor. These should be attracted to our churches, and feel that they are there in the midst of those who sympathize with them; and I am sure that this style of preaching would be as useful to the more improved and opulent as to the poor.

"I have suggested, that in the constitution of your auxiliary societies some article might be inserted, pledging the members to moral concern and exertions for their less favored fellow-creatures.

"Again. A society has lately been formed in New York, of which the object is, to form a connection between every family in comfortable circumstances and one or more individuals or families of the poor. I think this association worth inquiring into, for its object is, not to produce action in a mass, but to connect individuals with individuals, and to promote private efforts for the present and spiritual good of others.

"I like much your plan of a quarterly publication relating to philanthropic objects. I only hope that the philanthropy which it will breathe and cherish may be of a generous and Christian character, that it will teach all classes of society respect for one another, and will found its exhortations to well-doing, and all its means of usefulness, on just views of human nature, &c. Would not occasional accounts of virtuous poverty, of high examples of virtue found in common life, be very useful?

"I think that the moment has come when zealous effort should be made, and would succeed, for elevating the poorer classes, by improving the means of education instituted for their benefit. The public attention is already drawn to the intellectual deficiencies in our common schools, &c. Cannot these be made to exert a new *moral* influence, such as would carry forward society? Cannot the community be made to understand, that the primary object of our public schools should be to breathe pure and generous sentiments into children, to form good citizens, to give at once the spirit and the capacity of usefulness, &c.? I wish our body might distinguish themselves by zeal in this cause.

"The principal means for spreading the true spirit of Christianity among us, and for benefiting our race, which occur to me at this moment, I have now stated. I rely on more practical men for this part of the work. If we can only agree as to the character by which we wish our class of Christians to be distinguished, there will not be so much difficulty as to the means. Perhaps we do not agree as much here as is supposed. You, for example, wish to give to our denomination more seriousness and self-denial. So do I; but I am very anxious that this self-denial and seriousness should differ very much from the qualities bearing these names among the more rigid denominations. These qualities have had and still have in the Christian world an ascetic character, not a little superstitious, and quite repulsive, and are founded on the conceit of some repugnance between common enjoyments and communion with God. I wish that we may be serious and self-denying, from a clear, bright perception of Christianity as a religion of perfect, unbounded, self-immolating love, — as designed to bring us to communion with a God of infinite goodness, and to the consecration of ourselves to his benevolent purposes, — as designed to conform us to Christ, to breathe into us the spirit of his cross, to make us martyrs in heart, if not in actual suffering, for the highest good of our fellow-beings. No self-denial can be so entire as that produced by these views of Christianity, and yet, instead of being ascetic, it would form a character of singular cheerfulness, social warmth, and free, affectionate intercourse with all within our reach."

"*April* 4, 1834. The meeting of last evening has led me to turn my thoughts upon the great subject of our conference, and I think it may be useful to put some of my views on paper. I do it immediately, because I may be too much engaged hereafter.

"I. The first question is, How shall the Ministry at Large be supported? I certainly wish to provide for its permanence, but have doubts about the expediency of raising a fund. I will give some of my reasons: —

"1. I think no act of benevolence is performed so reluctantly as a subscription to a fund. People are willing to contribute to immediate operations for good objects, but are discouraged, not simply by the distance, but the uncertainty, of the good which is to be accomplished by a fund.

"2. A fund may be lost or diminished by the injudiciousness, unfaithfulness, or misfortunes which are to be expected in a long course of time.

"3. A fund is liable to great perversion. See the charitable endowments of England.

"4. A fund is too apt to be a substitute for continued energy. An object is made sure only by zeal for its accomplishment, and zeal is apt to flag when permanent provision is made for it, when zeal can be dispensed with. Official coldness takes the place of fervor.

"5. I have no desire to do the work of posterity. Posterity ought to do more and sacrifice more for the poor than we; and we are to insure their activity, not by leaving them funds, but by bequeathing them the spirit of wise and resolute effort for the benefit of the poor.

"I am aware that it may be replied, that, although a fund has its inconveniences, it still is fitted to perpetuate exertions for a good object, and to keep it in sight amidst the great changes of opinion, feeling, and outward condition to which society is liable, and that experience has proved its usefulness in giving permanence to the institutions of which it forms a part.

"I answer, that if there are no other means of giving permanence to the Ministry at Large, this argument deserves serious consideration. But other means exist. I find them in our *ecclesiastical institutions.*

"I know no surer method of giving stability to this ministry than by engrafting it on fixed and time-hallowed establishments. I have therefore from the beginning wished to connect it with our *churches.* I have wished every church to feel its obligation to aid in imparting means of moral and religious improvement to the more depressed classes of the community. Whether this shall be done through annual contributions, benevolent societies, or any other mode, is not here the question. There will be no difficulty in determining the method, if once the principle be settled.

"The benefits of this plan are great.

"1. A surer and broader foundation for this ministry is laid than by any fund. It can go down only with our churches.

"2. A zeal for this object will become as extensive as our churches, and a consequent extension of effort, not stopping at the ministry, will follow.

"3. The good done to our churches will be great. The spirit of Christ will be cherished in them, for this moral interest in others is eminently his spirit. A new means of edification, namely, religious action, will be added to religious instruction, — perhaps a more powerful means. The inert, passive character of our churches will be removed. A new interest of the members will be awakened in their church-union, when it brings them to coöperation for good ends. That our frequent church-union does not answer its end as we desire, we all feel. A new life needs to be infused into it. This may be done by making our churches associations for the spiritual good of all around them, and especially of the poor. You will see in the sequel that I wish to bring our churches into still greater activity.

"4. It seems to me that the legitimate influence of the minister will be increased by engaging his society in noble objects, in which his efficiency and guidance will necessarily be required.

"II. I now proceed to the second question, By what organization shall the most efficient exertions of Unitarians be secured for the moral and religious, and, I would add, intellectual elevation of the poor? I wish liberal, broad views of the subject to be taken. Human nature is not to be improved by parts. One cause of the failure of well-intended effort has been its narrowness, partiality. But, leaving this point, what organization will be best?

"I wish no new society to be formed, unless plainly necessary.

"1. There is a prejudice against new societies. The public are wearied with them. Once a new society implied new effort; I apprehend that time has gone by.

"2. A new society formed by us for this object would be regarded as an imitation or consequence of the society just formed by the Calvinists, and would fall under the suspicion of being merely a means of keeping our friends from enlisting under that standard, and of saving ourselves from the reproach of lukewarmness. Now you well know, that for a long time we have been looking towards these very efforts, and that our zeal owes nothing to the example of other Christians, and I am sorry that we should appear more disadvantageously than truth requires.

"You will ask, then, what organization I would recommend. I answer, that which exists, and which by its effects has proved itself equal to this work. I mean the Unitarian Association. I say, give energy and extension to an existing association, which has worked well, rather than frame a new one. It is a good rule in church as in state, always to build on an old foundation when it will answer your purpose. The American Unitarian Association has branches, auxiliaries, societies spread through all our congregations, and through these it can easily bring our churches to coöperate in this great work. Here is a machinery already formed, and which cannot be turned to a better use. These auxiliaries may each elect one of its number to be a member of a central committee, which shall act in relation to this great subject of the religious elevation of the poor just as your present committee acts in regard to tracts, missionaries, &c. My reasons for this arrangement are numerous.

"1. Your association would start with the great advantage of the authority and influence acquired by a successful experiment. Whatever may be thought of your other labors, all feel that you have done good by the ministry you have instituted. In this work you all rejoice. This vantage-ground ought not to be abandoned.

"2. I do not wish, I have never wished, that the Unitarian Association should be exclusively devoted to the propagation of opinions. I have expressed this view to you before. The Association, by this action, is unjust to itself, and to the cause it espouses. We profess to value opinions only for their moral, sanctifying, ennobling influence, and this truth ought to stand out in all our efforts. We are not a vulgar sect, and should never appear in that character. The Association is to gain dignity and efficiency by prominent, palpable exertions for the regeneration of the world. I believe that a new life will be breathed into it by a new consciousness of being engaged in so great a work. How much confidence it will draw to itself, how much more animated support it will gain, by being regarded as something higher than a sectarian engine, as a spring of spiritual life to the depressed and poor, I need not say to you.

"3. I hazard the appearance of repetition in what I am now to say, but its importance will justify me. We owe it to the cause of truth and virtue to give, as far as we can, a just exhibition of our system to the world. It is as yet little understood. One of its great distinctions is, that it inspires respect for human nature, and a fraternal spirit towards all orders of men. I say, then, that an association, calling itself Unitarian, and peculiarly representing this body, ought to bear this stamp broadly, conspicuously. I wish it on this account to be the centre of the influence now to be exerted.

"4. By the arrangement I have proposed, the auxiliary societies, which are now inert, mere contributors of funds to the American Unitarian Association, will be brought into beneficent action. Their members will be the ministers or agents of the central committee in which they will be represented. The plans of this committee will often be referred to them for discussion. Then it will be their duty to interest the churches within which they are formed in their great work; and thus our churches will receive a new impulse through this organization.

"5. It will be another important benefit of this organization, that we can extend the great work in which we wish to engage through the country, wherever an auxiliary society exists. We ought to aim that our brethren everywhere should devote themselves to the religious advancement of society. I have before expressed my wish to your Association, that an article to this effect should be inserted in the constitution of every auxiliary. How much more effectually will this be done, if the parent association give itself up to this cause!

"6. It is an argument for a new society, that it will be open to Christians of all denominations, that its name will repel none, that it will have nothing sectarian in form or character. I cannot assent to this view. I do not believe that we can or ought to act with other Christians in this cause. I earnestly desire to coöperate with them as far as possible. For example, when a particular vice, like intemperance, is to be warred against, we ought to join with them heart and hand. But when the object is to enlighten, improve, elevate, the depressed classes of the community, — not merely to stay a definite evil, but to awaken their moral nature, to unfold to them their connections with God and the future world, to show them the true glory of Jesus Christ, and to breathe his spirit into them, — then we must go to them with our distinctive views, not our theological dogmas, but our views of human nature, of God's character, of the true perfection of man, &c., views as distinctive as those of the Trinitarians. In this work we ought not to be fettered by compromise with other sects. Dr. Tuckerman did good by carrying among the poor the most enlightened, liberal, elevated principles of Christianity. We believe that we can do more for the poor than other sects, — that our faith is the germ of a higher social condition and of higher virtue than any other faith has produced or can produce. Then let it have free course and unobstructed operation. Let it not be repressed by a new society comprehending all sects.

" 7. It seems to me an important means of improving the poor — meaning by this class the indigent — to improve the classes immediately above them, from whom their number is constantly recruited, and with whom they must have much intercourse. Such are day-laborers, journeymen, &c. Now I have long wished the introduction of a ministry for this portion of society. I have wished for congregations of the same materials with the Methodist, which should be instructed by liberal ministers, fitted to interest such hearers. Perhaps such a ministry would do more good than that for the poor, for the great majority of the large class not connected with our present churches must be of this description. I wish this object to be kept in view distinctly in the organization for improving the poor, — and this object plainly belongs to the Unitarian Association, and seems to me to deserve their peculiar attention.

" What we want is a comprehensive plan, including not the vicious poor only, but all the poor, and not the indigent only, but the class immediately above them. It is this last class which furnishes materials for the atheistical party, much more than the indigent. Now the American Unitarian Association seems to me better fitted than a separate institution for action on this class."

"*Newport*, August 22, 1834.* I want to talk to you about your objects, and especially about the great step we have taken in Boston for the permanent support of the ministry at large. I consider the union of the churches for this end as the most important measure adopted for a long time among us, and the great labor of you and your colleagues must be to make it effectual. The support of the ministry is, after all, but a secondary object. The first is to bring our churches into connection with the degraded class of society, to awaken in them Christ's spirit of sympathy with the poor and ignorant, and to call forth new and sustained efforts for the elevation of the low."

1835.† "As yet, the ministry has done little for the poor, and will do little, if managed on the old plan. You have been useful by some new modes of influence. What are they? You have done good by approaching the poor with more sympathy and respect, and more of the feeling of brotherhood, than had been expressed before. You have gone more with the tone of encouragement and hope, and have spoken to them as capable of feeling the power of high motives. So far, so good. But the distinctive views you have given them, and your distinctive modes of presenting them, have not, I think, been brought out by you very clearly. . . . . .

"What I want is, that you should substitute for vague, conventional, hackneyed forms of speech, distinct, substantial truths, which the intellect may grasp, and which answer to the profoundest wants of the spiritual nature. All this, perhaps you will say, is vague enough. Be it so. Still it may give you some idea of what I miss."

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* To Joseph Tuckerman, D.D.

† Ibid.

"*Newport*, July 30, 1835.* The greatest wisdom is required in yourself and your associates to recommend your work. This you are to do, not by talking much about it, not by being anxious to bring it before public bodies, but by giving practical proofs of its efficiency. My hope rests wholly on the unwearied, disinterested zeal of the ministers. If the ministry shall degenerate into a formal service, or be carried on with no more zeal than the common ministry, it will come to nothing. It cannot live a languid life, and this is its advantage."

"*August* 10, 1836.† What is the influence of the credit system on the poor and the laboring class? Is it good or bad for them, that they take up articles on trust? I have believed that they were much injured in this way, that they were kept from forming habits of providence, that they were led to purchase luxuries which they would forego, were they obliged to earn before they spend, and that habits of deceit are formed. But a friend tells me it is not so; that the laboring classes, in order to get credit, are obliged and induced to be honest; that the dishonest are soon detected and cease to be trusted; and that, as a matter of fact, little is lost by the shopkeeper. The subject, I think, is an important one, and has wide bearings. Will you give me the fruits of your own and others' observation?"

"*Boston*, March 6, 1837. I take a great interest in the laboring classes, and I feel that a right religious impulse would do more to elevate them than any thing else. There are among them choice spirits, and they seem to be exposed to peculiar temptations, for they furnish the principal harvests to the preachers of infidelity. Can they be taken hold of? Mr. Brownson, who came here to form a congregation out of that class, has not succeeded as well as I hoped; but this would not discourage me, because he has adopted a philosophical style not suited to them and has had in view too much another class. He tells me that he has found among them more hatred of the rich than he expected, and very probably this may form one of their tendencies to infidelity. I have a strong impression that rational views may be so brought out as to interest deeply this class of society; and he who shall give full proof of this will render great service to the cause of truth and humanity."

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* To Joseph Tuckerman, D. D.

† Ibid.

"*June* 21, 1837.* —— wishes to form a congregation of workingmen, to whom the church shall be a bond of strong union, who, beginning with religion, shall associate themselves for generous improvement, both intellectual and moral, and who shall act together to spread a spirit of improvement through their own class. I have long had this object at heart. I earnestly hope that he will enjoy sympathy and encouragement in this philanthropic work. Is there any other which has greater claims? Can we doubt what class of society should receive the most immediate aid?"

In these last extracts, it will be noticed, Dr. Channing speaks of the formation of a congregation of workingmen as an object which he had long had much at heart. He had observed modern society deeply enough to become convinced, that, unless some effective means could be used to establish in virtue, intelligence, and independent conditions the laboring classes, pauperism would constantly increase. He saw that the incessant fluctuations in all branches of productive industry, the bankruptcies, monopolies, and commercial crises, inevitable in an age made delirious by worldly competition, and the reaction of these upon wages, prices, and the interest for money, were exerting a most disastrous influence upon those whose only capital is strength and skill. And without well knowing how to extricate them from the mesh of perplexity in which so many of the noblest spirits of all civilized communities are involved, he yet was desirous to extend to them the respectful sympathy and cordial coöperation of the more privileged classes. Especially did he hope that the workingmen, if united in one strong body by religious principle and humane sentiment, would, through concerted wisdom, discern practical modes of attaining to their rightful position of cultivation, social honor, and political influence without recourse to revolutionary outbreaks.

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* To Dr. Charles Follen.

These views had led him to look with most lively expectation upon the plans of the Rev. O. A. Brownson, when, in 1836, he attempted to stay the tide of infidelity which was then threatening to swallow up the workingmen's movement, and to form in Boston a "Society of Union and Progress." Well-meaning but timid conservatives all around him regarded this new manifestation of religious radicalism with suspicion, disgust, and ridicule; but Dr. Channing gladly recognized in it a promise of true social regeneration. Speaking of Mr. Brownson in a letter to a friend, he says:—"I have great interest in him. I comprehend how, to such a man, the present social state should be full of deformity. I far prefer his morbidly sensitive vision to prevalent evils, to the stone-blindness of the multitudes who condemn him." With open purse and ready counsel he sought for several years to aid this project; and even after Mr. Brownson's energies were diverted from immediate practical ends to profound problems of philosophy and religion, Dr. Channing was so solicitous that the original plan of combining the laboring classes into a society of mutual education and general coöperation should be successfully carried out, that he seriously deliberated whether he should not, in concert with a young friend, undertake the establishment of a Free Church. Nothing but physical infirmity finally prevented the accomplishment of this design.

The Lectures on Self-culture and on the Elevation of the Laboring Classes,* delivered in 1838 and 1840, contain the best expression of Dr. Channing's principles and aims. To a friend, who feared that these efforts were a waste and perversion of his powers, he wrote: —

> "You wish me to treat different subjects, and think that others may discuss Society. This remark would seem to show that I have not succeeded or done much for my end. That end has been to bring down the Highest to the apprehension of the most lowly, — to show how the Divine might mingle with and be brought out in common life and in every condition. Many cannot do this."

Nothing, perhaps, which he ever presented to the public gave him such pure and abiding satisfaction, as these expressions of his profound regard for the hardly used, but ever more and more to be honored classes, from the root of whose patient industry springs forth the well-being of communities. These lectures were reprinted in Great Britain and widely circulated among the overtasked operatives of that prolific kingdom; and one day, when a letter of thanks had reached him from the Mechanic Institute of Slaithwaite, he said, with glowing countenance and beaming eyes, — "This is honor, this is honor." On his table was then lying a letter written by command of the monarch of one of the mightiest nations of Europe, to thank him for a copy of his writings; but this heartfelt expression of gratitude, in the handwriting of a rough miner, moved him more deeply than the courteous praises of the great, the admiration of scholars, or even the warm appreciation of friends. It filled him with inexpressible joy to know that he had smoothed the wrinkles, dried the tears, new-strung the muscles of the toil-worn poor. The answer which he returned to this letter reveals his feeling.

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* Works, Vol. II., pp. 347 - 411; Vol. V., pp. 151 - 230.

"*Boston, March* 1, 1841.

"GENTLEMEN: — I received with great satisfaction your letter communicating to me the resolution from the Slaithwaite Mechanic Institute. This proof of the kind reception of my Lectures by those for whom they were especially written is very encouraging to me. I have long had a full faith that the laboring classes, so long depressed, must rise. The signs of this happier state of things are multiplying; and you, who are probably younger than I am, may live to see a better age.

"I have been much cheered by information of the progress of the Temperance cause in your country. Ardent spirits have been the curse of the laborer. He must seek safety and elevation in total abstinence. One of his first steps towards the dignity of a man is to renounce what makes men brutes. If his self-respect cannot carry him to this point of self-denial, I have little hope of him. The people must learn to restrain and govern themselves, or they will be kept under the yoke, and used as mere tools. Government finds its reasons or pretexts for subjecting the multitude to excessive restraints in their ignorance, unruliness, and incapacity of self-control. Every mechanic institute, every institution for raising the people, should start with the standard of temperance.

"I have also been cheered by hearing that the recent efforts of a part of the laboring classes to maintain their claims by violence are more and more discouraged among you. Passion and force may pull down the government, but the laborer must be involved in the common ruin. To make yourselves felt, it is not necessary to rage and destroy. Your true strength lies in growing intelligence, uprightness, self-respect, trust in God, and trust in one another. These cannot fail to secure to you your just share of social privileges.

"From what I have heard, I cannot but hope that the cause of the laboring classes is not to be dishonored and injured by the spirit of irreligion. It is amazing that men calling themselves your friends should rise up against Christianity, — a religion whose first teachers were taken from these classes, which has no respect of persons, which knows nothing of the distinctions of birth and wealth, which commands the strong to succour and lift up the weak, and which, as far as it is effectual, breathes mutual deference and mutual interest in all classes of society. It is under the cross that the battle of humanity is to be fought.

"An essential means of elevating the working classes is a system of national education, having for its object, not to enslave the mind of the laborer, but to make him enlightened and efficient, at once able and disposed to discharge wisely his public and private duties. I trust the reproach is soon to be taken from your government, of withholding this most necessary good. This should be demanded by you with an importunity which will take no denial.

"I earnestly wish success to the laborer's efforts for improving his outward condition. But he must not give himself exclusively to the outward. Good wages are not happiness. A man may prosper and still be a poor creature. On the other hand, in the most unprosperous condition, a man may do the work and secure the great good of life. Outward circumstances are not omnipotent. Our minds may triumph over our lot. Under great social disadvantages, we still may endure and act as men and Christians. Our very thoughts may be made the means or occasions of signal virtues, and in this way may bring a peace and hope which no mere prosperity can give.

"I beg you to express my best wishes to the Members of the Slaithwaite Mechanic Institute.

"Very truly, your friend,
"Wm. E. Channing.

"Messrs. Jabez Meal,
Thomas Sykes,
John Farley,
Slaithwaite, near Huddersfield, England."

Soon after Dr. Channing's death, the following affecting tribute was received from Mr. Meal, and shall here be recorded as one of the brightest memorials in this biography.

"It will be some relief, under your bereavement, to know that the good man never dies; he lives and breathes in our cottages; his work on Self-culture is the text-book of the young men of our land; the soul-stirring sentiments of that book are working a moral regeneration in this country, and

I feel that Boston has given us another **Franklin**, another guide to the regions of virtue."

In another letter, written about the same period with this reply to the miners, Dr. Channing has yet further exhibited his views in relation to the means of securing to the people their long-withheld rights.

"*Boston*, March 31, 1841.* My dear Sir, — I received your letter, and the publications accompanying it, with much sensibility. Such testimonies as you and some others have given to the influence of my writings are unspeakably precious rewards for the labors of my life. I thank you for the happiness and encouragement you have given me, and I feel myself bound by your affectionate communication to new exertions for my fellow-creatures.

"I have weighed your suggestion as to the good I might do by an address to the middle classes of your country, and I find my fears stronger than my hopes. It is hard for a man to understand a foreign country. Feelings and prejudices must be spared, of which he knows little or nothing. I fear, too, that any good effect I might propose would be defeated by the appearance of presumptuousness in such an address. National jealousy is very unreasonable, and might refuse to be schooled by a foreigner. Let me add, that your partiality seems to me to exaggerate my influence. I state these difficulties in the belief that you will see some weight in them.

"I read with much interest the pamphlet from the imprisoned Chartists. I rejoiced to find that they had seized on so many great and just views. Occasional extravagances were to be expected from such men, especially under what they deem persecution. I rejoice that they see so clearly that the laboring classes must rise from brutal intemperance and ignorance, if they would cease to be treated as brutes. They show, too, their sagacity in distrusting the education which would be given them by the mass of the aristocracy and clergy. It would be a servile one. Nothing would discourage me more than the success of the clergy in getting the education of the country into their hands. Religion, as it is called, would then become associated with old abuses and prejudices, and the spirit of reform would consequently become irreligious, so that not a few of the most active and generous spirits in the community would be found in the ranks of infidelity. Christianity has suffered from nothing so much as from its being seized on by the foes of human rights and social progress. It is plain from the pamphlet you sent me, that the Chartists have no conception of the importance of true religion, and especially of its bearing on their own cause. They understand by Christianity, I fear, not what came from the poor, houseless, meek, sympathizing Prophet of Galilee, not what was taught from the fishing-boat and on the mountain, but what issues from cathedrals and mitred men, from a conservative corporation, whose sympathies are with 'the powers that be.' This misapprehension and want of religion threaten much injury to their cause. Religion, in the generous, not sectarian, meaning of the word, has this grand distinction from all human methods and systems, that, whilst it restrains, it elevates yet more. Without it the struggles of the laboring classes for rights and dignity are any thing but hopeful.

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* To Hamer Stansfield, Esq., Leeds, England.

"It is from the free and enlightened spirits of the middle classes that help is to come to the Chartist. I therefore rejoiced in your Leeds meeting, as fitted to bring these two great divisions of society nearer. Nothing will soothe and tranquillize the Chartists like sympathy, like some proof that they are not abandoned by the more prosperous; and to tranquillize them is a great end. They can gain nothing by violence. Their progress, I fear, will be slow. I do not doubt that your aristocracy is very far in advance of every other. But all possessors of exclusive privileges cling to them as to life, and hereditary rulers legislate first to secure their own power. Thus the portion of society for whom government is especially established, and who ought to be its first objects, I mean the poor and the weak, are the last to share its benefits. This topic has carried me so far, that I can add nothing on others suggested by your packet. Let me renew my thanks to you, and assure you that I am very truly yours, &c."

Dr. Channing's sympathies went freely forth to the toiling multitudes of every grade ; and, among other injured classes, he was much interested in that noble body of men whom the mean neglect of an intensely selfish commerce has so long kept down and mastered by a system of precarious support, excessive hardship, and brutalizing enjoyment, — the sailors. Feeling how much all nations are indebted to the courageous sacrifices of these generous and thoughtless beings, and what base returns are made to them for all their sufferings, he rejoiced in every attempt to secure to them comforts, refining influences, economical habits, intellectual and religious discipline, and an established position in society. Accordingly, when Father Taylor came to Boston, Dr. Channing was the first to give him efficient support, by heading the subscription list for his Bethel ; and from that time forward till his death he encouraged every effort of the patriarch of seamen. He was delighted, when attending at the sailors' meeting, to watch the bronzed faces of the weatherbeaten tars now melt into tears, now brighten into smiles, while their sturdy forms swayed to and fro as the heart-stirring eloquence of their wonderful preacher swept over them with alternate gales and calms. It was in the Federal Street Church that Father Taylor first pleaded the cause of his brethren before a crowded assembly of the most enlightened and munificent citizens of Boston; and without disparagement to the many devoted friends who by heart and hand have for years upheld his noble enterprise, it may be truly said, that to no one was his gratitude more strong and constant than to Dr. Channing.

By the whole tone of his character, and his habits of thought, Dr. Channing was disposed to look less to changes in external condition, than to intellectual culture and moral development, for permanent reforms. This has plainly appeared from the letters already quoted. His great desire was to open to all men free opportunities for the highest spiritual refinement. A paper written for the "Reformer," in 1837, very clearly and fully presents his views upon this subject.

"ON THE EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLE, AND ESPECIALLY OF THE LABORING CLASS. — What is education? This is one of the watchwords, almost a cant word, of the day; but few terms are so vague. It is said by the friends of the working classes, that their first great want is a better education. Let us try to understand what this is.

"The great end of education is not to train a man to get a living. This is plain, because life was given for a higher end than simply to toil for its own prolongation. A comfortable subsistence is, indeed, very important to the purpose of life, be this what it may. A man half-fed, half-clothed, and fearing to perish from famine or cold, will be too crushed in spirit to do the proper work of a man. He must be set free from the iron grasp of want, from the constant pressure of painful sensations, from grinding, ill-requited toil. Unless a man be trained to get a comfortable support, his prospects of improvement and happiness are poor. But if his education aims at nothing more, his life will turn to little account.

"To educate a man is to unfold his faculties, to give him the free and full use of his powers, and especially of his best powers. It is, first, to train the intellect, to give him a love of truth, and to instruct him in the processes by which it may be acquired. It is to train him to soundness of judgment, to teach him to weigh evidence, and to guard him against the common sources of error. It is to give him a thirst for knowledge, which will keep his faculties in action through life. It is to aid him in the study of the outward world, to initiate him into the physical sciences, so that he will understand the principles of his trade or business, and will be able to comprehend the phenomena which are continually passing before his eyes. It is to make him acquainted with his own nature, to give him that most important means of improvement, self-comprehension.

"In the next place, to educate a man is to train the conscience, to give him a quick, keen discernment of the right, to teach him duty in its great principles and minute applications, to establish in him immovable principles of action. It is to show him his true position in the world, his true relation to God and his fellow-beings, and the immutable obligations laid on him by these. It is to inspire him with the idea of perfection, to give him a high moral aim, and to show how this may be maintained in the commonest toils, and how every thing may be made to contribute to its accomplishment.

"Further, to educate a man in this country is to train him to be a good citizen, to establish him in the principles of political science, to make him acquainted with our history, government, and laws, to teach him our great interests as a nation, and the policy by which they are to be advanced, and to impress him deeply with his responsibilities, his great trusts, his obligations to disinterested patriotism as the citizen of a free state.

"Again, to educate a man is to cultivate his imagination and taste, to awaken his sensibility to the beautiful in nature and art, to give him the capacity of enjoying the writings of men of genius, to prepare him for the innocent and refined pleasures of literature.

"I will only add, that to educate a man is to cultivate his powers of expression, so that he can bring out his thoughts with clearness and strength, and exert a moral influence over his fellow-creatures. This is essential to the true enjoyment and improvement of social life.

"According to these views, the laboring classes may be said to have as yet few means of education, excepting those which Providence furnishes in the relations, changes, occupations, and discipline of life. The great school of life, of Providence, is indeed open to all; but what, I would ask, is done by our public institutions for the education of the mass of the people? In the mechanical nature of our common schools, is it ever proposed to unfold the various faculties of a human being, and to prepare him for self-improvement through life? Indeed, according to the views of education now given, how defective are our institutions for rich as well as poor, and what a revolution is required in our whole system of training the young!

"The great aim of philanthropy should be, that every member of the community may receive such an education as has been described. To bring forward every human being, to develop every mind, is the great purpose of society. I say of society, not of government; for government is a mere instrument for holding society together, a condition of its existence, and not the great power by which its ends are to be accomplished. One of the pernicious doctrines of the day, very pernicious to the working classes, is, that government is to regenerate society, and exalt the individual to his true dignity. Government enables us to live together in society, and to make efforts for our own and others' welfare. But social progress depends on the spring in each man's breast, and not on the operations of the state. Government may be compared to the foundation and walls of a manufactory, which inclose and protect the moving and guiding powers. It is not the moving or guiding powers, — but the necessary condition of their action. The people must not look to it for what their own energies can alone effect.

" How are the people to obtain the thorough education of which I have spoken? How are the children of the laboring classes to be supplied with the means of a thorough intellectual and moral training? One reply to this question, and a reply which has found favor with the working classes, is, that the public should sustain extensive institutions, in which the poor shall receive as liberal instruction as the rich. In other words, the rich should educate the children of the comparatively poor, and should appropriate to this object a large part of their wealth; for the institutions proposed would be more costly than all others which now exist. To this plan there are several objections.

" The first objection is, that by such provision the energy and independence of the laboring classes would be impaired. They would place themselves on the ground of paupers, as far as education is concerned. That great motive to industry, which is now found in the desire to give children what is thought to be a respectable training, would cease. The wholesome pride, which refuses to accept as bounty, much less to extort, what it can earn for itself, would be broken. The parent, released from his highest duty, to watch over the education of his child, would lose a measure of parental love, dignity, and force, and thus one of the chief springs of social activity would be impaired.

"Another objection is, that it would be unjust, morally wrong, to compel one class to support the children of another. The rich would not only complain, but would have a right to complain. A man's property is not to be taken from him by society, but for the preservation and general interests of society, in which every individual has a personal concern. The common idea is, that because our present school system is supported by taxes, the burden of which falls on men of property, therefore taxes may be laid to any extent to sustain the costliest institutions for the education of the poorest classes. But the two cases essentially differ. Our present school system is established as a means of general safety and order; it is founded for a public object, and not to perfect the individual, not to provide for human nature the means of development in every condition of life. It is not from respect for human nature, it is not from kindness to individuals, but for the purpose of securing obedience to the laws, of preparing the mass to obtain an honest subsistence, of preventing a fatal insubordination and ruinous habits in the young, that our public schools are established. Every rich man has an interest in them, though he has no child. His rights will be better secured, in other words, the ends of political society be better accomplished, by imparting, as we now do, the rudiments of knowledge to all classes of the people. But it is not for political ends that a higher education is to be given to the people, that cultivation, science, accomplishments, moral dignity, are to be diffused through all classes. The philanthropist desires the elevation of the mass, not to give security or outward prosperity to the state. He desires it for its own sake. He desires the individual everywhere to become wise, pure, noble, from love to the individual. It is not for the state, not for man regarded merely as a citizen, but for man as man, for human dignity and happiness, that a generous education should be universally diffused. It is very doubtful, whether, by making the cultivation of the people the great object, a community will become richer. It must perhaps sacrifice, in a measure, its material, outward interests to the elevation of all its members. We cannot, therefore, on the ground of the interest of the state, require the rich to found and maintain costly establishments for universal education. The principle by which taxation for our present schools is justified does not apply to institutions which look to something nobler than political good.

"Another objection to the support of these institutions for training the people by the community or by taxation is, that in this case education would fall into the hands of the government, and into worse hands it cannot well fall. Government, instituted to watch over present, material interests, and carried on chiefly by selfish, aspiring men, cannot comprehend the object of universal education, and could only obstruct and degrade by attempting to promote it. A politician looks at men in one light only; they are instruments by which he is to rise. That they are beings to be raised for their own sakes, that they have glorious capacities which are now grievously wronged, — these are truths at which he would smile in scorn, if it would not endanger his popularity. Give to government a control over the wealth of the country, for the purpose of promoting a liberal culture of all classes, and to what low schemes of party politics and personal elevation, to what corrupt uses, to what profusion and profligacy, would this power be prostituted! The taint which government already spreads through the country is sufficiently mournful. What might we not fear, if the politicians should add to their offices that of training and forming the public mind? To this it may be replied, that the Prussian government is doing much for the education of the people, and if one government may so do, why not all? But this case proves nothing. Prussia may, indeed, boast of imparting to the multitude more instruction than any other state. But Prussia is doing very, very little towards the education of the people, in the true sense of the word. Her aim is plain, namely, to give the people all the instruction which consists with and may sustain an absolute government; but this is not to educate them. The time has gone by for shutting out light from the people. The Prussian monarch has undertaken to let in the light on such objects, and to such extent, as to him may seem best. Despotism must choose between two courses. It must either exclude instruction, or become itself the instructor. This the Catholic priesthood discovered ages ago, and despots are discovering now. In Prussia the two great elements of education are wanting, — the free development of the faculties, and the inspiration of a deep thirst for self-improvement. The government seizes on the very principle which above all others lifts man above the power of man, that is, religion, and makes it the means of bowing the young mind to servile acquiescence in unlimited power. A despot may teach, but cannot educate; and this will be true of all politicians, until the time comes when it will be understood that the first and essential property of a statesman is virtue, and that vice is nowhere so atrocious as in public life. At present, morality is the last of a statesman's qualifications. How can he comprehend what is meant by the education of the people?

"Let me mention one more objection to the education of all classes by taxation, or by the rich. It is essential to every system for giving a liberal education to all classes, that it should include the means of inuring the people to manual labor. By this labor the multitude must subsist. An education unfitting them to work would make their future lives useless and dishonorably dependent. Accordingly, there is no need of costly institutions for universal education. Manual labor must enter largely into the true system, and this, added to what parents can afford, will furnish, not all that is to be desired, yet all that is essential to the support of establishments in which a broad foundation is to be laid for future improvements.

"This last topic suggests the true mode of educating the laboring classes. It is by *manual labor schools* that this great achievement of civilization and philanthropy is to cease to be a dream, is to become a reality. In no institutions have the laboring classes such an interest. A philanthropist who desires the happiness and honor of giving the most effectual spring to social progress cannot better employ himself than in studying, improving, and extending these. They are yet in their infancy, and need many experiments to determine the best modes of action. Let the working-man's friend turn his mind to these.

"I have said the rich will repel all attempts to force them to the support of plans for universal education. If, however, the enlightened among the laboring classes and their enlightened friends will set in motion a system of improvement which promises good and great results, the rich will not be found wanting in sympathy and benevolent aid. They cannot and ought not to be driven; but many among them would contribute liberally and joyfully to any wise practicable effort for elevating the laboring classes. They must see, however, the practicableness of the scheme. Their skepticism must be overcome by seeing the mass of the people in earnest to improve themselves. Such efforts on the part of the many would be more liberally seconded by the philanthropy of the age than any benevolent project to which it is now pledged. Thus the union of all classes would be accomplished. All would labor together for the advancement of the human race."

This paper shows how clear was Dr. Channing's conviction, that "the great work of the age," as he said in a letter to Sismondi, "is the diffusion of intelligence and enlightened religion through the mass of the people." * And the following extracts will manifest the comprehensiveness of his desires and plans for pouring the fullest measure of illumination upon every class in the community, from the most neglected to the most privileged.

"*Newport*, June 30, 1835.† What you tell me of the Farm School has removed a weight from my mind. I desire its success, not only for its own sake, but still more for the encouragement it will give to labor for the safety and redemption of the young. Do not commit yourselves to an ordinary teacher or superintendent. Do not be satisfied with an economical establishment. Make changes, till you find a man who can understand the young and reach their spiritual nature."

"Gentlemen,—The attention of the Association of Ministers in Boston and its vicinity has been called to the condition of children and young persons employed in manufactories. From the representations made to them of the neglected state of this very interesting class of the community, they resolved, if possible, to obtain information on the subject from different parts of the Commonwealth, and for this purpose addressed a circular letter to several ministers within whose parishes manufactures are established. The answers to this circular have not been as numerous and definite as they had hoped; but still they have derived from them several hints which they consider useful, and which they respectfully submit to the honorable committee to which this subject is referred.

"We do not deem it necessary to enlarge on the importance of giving all possible efficacy to the wise provisions which this Commonwealth has made for extending the means of education to all orders of the community. The laws on this subject express the deep conviction which was fixed in the breasts of our ancestors, that the good citizen is to be formed in youth, and that free institutions are safe only in the hands of a people who have been trained to intelligence and virtue. Legislators cannot too solicitously guard against measures which tend to place any portion of the young beyond the reach of instruction, and to expose them to corrupting influences which will almost necessarily unfit them for the duties of men and citizens.

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* See his Address on the Present Age. Works, Vol. VI., pp. 147-182.

† To Joseph Tuckerman, D. D.

" It is to be feared, that, without much care, effects of this unhappy character will be produced by the incorporation of manufacturing companies, and by the extension of manufacturing institutions; and it is conceived that legislative provision cannot too early be made to resist this spreading evil.

" It is well known that in these establishments a large proportion of the labor is performed by children and young persons. To some of these young persons it is a benefit that they are received into manufactories, as in this way they are taken from the streets, from beggary, and from idleness, and are early accustomed to exertions which procure them a comfortable and honest support. But a manufactory abounds in temptations, and, unless attention be given to their minds and morals, we have every reason to apprehend that their characters will be depraved, and that their future lives will prove not only ruinous to themselves, but most pernicious to the community.

" A child who enters a manufactory is generally removed from the care of parents, and from the restraints and meliorating influences of domestic life. He finds himself almost continually surrounded by numbers of his own age, among whom some have contracted bad habits, and are prepared to teach him the worst vices. His employment is made up of a constant repetition of movements which require little thought, and are very poorly adapted to unfold his faculties. Does not every intelligent parent immediately discern the tendencies of this mode of life, and feel the importance of counteracting them by instruction and moral discipline? Shall these children be abandoned to a degradation worse than death, in the bosom of a Christian community, and under a government which professes to respect the obligations of Christianity?

"It is very satisfactory to learn from the statements which have been received, that in several manufactories attention is given to the instruction of children, and that it has resulted in a sensible improvement of their minds and conduct. But it is feared that in many instances they are left without instruction, left to ignorance and vice. In some cases, the cupidity of parents unites with that of their employers in exacting from them labors disproportioned to their age. They are confined, with little interruption, through the day, to their work, and are denied, not only the means of improvement, but suitable relaxation. The consequence is, that the Lord's day, instead of being regarded as a proper season for private and public religious instruction, is made a holiday, and given up to those sports for which some time *ought to be found* and *will be found* in youth.

"The consequences of this unfavorable condition may be predicted almost with certainty. The corruption and misery which are seen in the manufacturing towns of England are a sad and solemn warning of what is to be expected here. Must not children thus abandoned grow up without any feeling of self-respect, addicted to low pleasures and to low company, ignorant of their obligations to God and to society, and prepared to follow the examples of brutal intemperance by which they are too often surrounded? It is of great importance, that, at the very introduction of manufacturing establishments, some checks should be applied to these causes of corruption.

"Perhaps it may be urged, as an objection to legislative interference, that these checks must be applied by those who have a more constant and intimate connection with the manufactories than the legislature, — by the proprietors, the managers, the parents of the children, and the ministers of religion within whose parishes manufactories are established. It is granted, that, without good dispositions on the part of the proprietors, and without a judicious inspection and restraint on the part of those to whose care and authority the children are immediately committed, much good is not to be expected from the wisest laws. But still it is conceived that legislative provisions may be productive of great benefit. They will express the sense of the community. They will give strength and weight to public opinion. They will insure to the children some degree of instruction, and will encourage the exertions of those who are interested in their welfare.

"It is, therefore, respectfully proposed, that an act be passed, requiring that in each manufactory a convenient room be provided in which the children may be taught, and in which all the laborers, if removed to a distance from the place of worship, may receive such instruction as the minister of the parish may be able to give them; that in each manufactory containing more than —— children under the age of —— years, a male and female teacher of good character be employed at least —— months in every year; that during this period the children be permitted and required to attend school —— hours each day; that the youngest children, at least, be taught in the daytime, and not in the evening, when they are too exhausted to receive instruction; and that, at all seasons of the year, certain portions of the day, or at least of Saturday, be allowed them for relaxation, that they may not be obliged to give up the Lord's day to amusement.

"It is hoped that this subject will not be dismissed as unimportant. These children, it should be remembered, will one day be men and women, citizens and heads of families. They will influence the community while they live, and will transmit their character to the succeeding age. All wise legislators have felt the importance of education, and have laid the foundation of national prosperity in the good habits and principles communicated to the young.

"That judicious provisions on this subject will be beneficial to the proprietors of manufactories cannot be doubted. What better pledge of success can they have than the good character of those whom they employ? They will also be able to obtain children on more favorable terms, in proportion as parents shall lose their fear of the corrupting tendency of manufacturing establishments. It is, therefore, hoped that the wisdom of the legislature will establish some general provisions for the object now proposed, an object which sound policy, humanity, and religion concur in recommending to their deliberate attention."*

1825.† "The young men of the city may be divided into three classes.

"The *first* consists of young men of education, and the sons of opulent families, who may belong to what is commonly called the first class of society. We have reason to believe that the state of morals among these has decidedly improved within a few years. The standard of character is higher than formerly. Vice, when practised, seeks concealment. Few or none boast of their excesses and glory in their shame. Profane and impure conversation is diminished. It is believed that the dissoluteness which was tolerated a few years ago would now be punished by expulsion from the best society. There is more of reverence for religion, and of enlightened and practical faith in Christianity. The young men who enjoy most of public favor are distinguished by strict morals and religious principle.

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* To a Committee of the Massachusetts Legislature.

† Report of the Committee appointed by the Wednesday Evening Association to consider the State of Morals among the Young Men of the City, and the Means of improving it.

"The *second* class consists of apprentices in stores and shops. The condition of these is, in many respects, unfavorable. It is believed that the sense of responsibility with regard to apprentices is not as strong in masters as formerly, and that they are less watched over. Another consideration is, that the greater part of them come from the country, and the change of residence is of itself no small trial to the character. On arriving here, they are placed in boarding-houses, where they are not held amenable to the heads of the family, but are left very much to themselves and to one another's influence. Most of them have no friends or relations in town, among whom they can pass their evenings and leisure time, and therefore resort to public places, and are more easily drawn into criminal pleasures. Many neglect public worship for want of accommodations in our churches. They cannot buy pews, single seats are not easily obtained, and Sunday is too often spent in riding, or reading novels, if not in less innocent employments.

"To meet these great evils, we recommend the following measures.

"1. That a committee be appointed to visit and inspect the Apprentices' Library, for the purpose of ascertaining whether it contains the best moral and religious books for readers of their age and condition, and of supplying what deficiencies may exist.

"2. It is thought very important, that in all our new churches a number of pews should be reserved to be rented in single seats, and that pews offered for sale in the old churches should be turned to the same use. We believe that great good would be the result. So great is the respect for religious institutions here, that a young man who has no place of worship feels that something is wanting to a good standing in society; and this motive, joined with higher ones, it is thought, would lead them to procure seats with eagerness.

"3. It is recommended that a Sunday evening lecture be instituted in winter expressly for young men, and that a syllabus of the topics — all of which shall be specially adapted to their condition, dangers, wants, &c. — shall be published. It is well known that some of the most important topics for this class of hearers cannot be discussed in a promiscuous assembly, and there is something particularly attractive in services intended for one class only.

"Another measure will be recommended under the next head.

"We now proceed to the *third* class of young men, consisting of the apprentices of mechanics, and the sons of laborers. The moral condition of these, we fear, is growing worse, rather than improving; and the cause is obvious. The free use of ardent spirits among their masters and fellow-laborers exposes them to strong temptation. Not a few of them, we suppose, come in for a share of the daily allowance of spirits made to workmen, and are thus trained to intemperance by regular indulgence. Accordingly, we know no method of benefiting these young men so important as to discourage the practice of giving a regular allowance of spirits to laborers.

"Another suggestion we would make is, that the committee already recommended should be instructed to inquire into the nature and operation of the institutions lately formed in Great Britain, and particularly Scotland, for giving lectures to young mechanics on the scientific principles of their various arts. It is said that these have awakened much interest, and promise to do much in calling forth the dormant intellect in the more neglected classes of society; and we may certainly anticipate a more beneficial result in this country than in Europe.

"The same committee may also inquire whether no interesting instruction can be given in the evening to the preceding class of apprentices, suited to prepare them for a more intelligent prosecution of business. Whatever will enlarge their minds and occupy their evenings will improve their morals."

"*May* 13, 1834, Tuesday.* Among the good signs of the times is the demand for better means of education. In this community we understand more and more that our kindness for our children cannot be expressed more wisely and effectually than by placing them under the best instruction. But we must not think that we have fully discharged our obligations in this respect. The provision for education among us bears no just proportion to the wealth of our city. That more is done here for the instruction of the laboring classes than is done elsewhere may be granted, though our superiority on this point is not as indisputable as we commonly imagine. But who will pretend that the children of the more prosperous classes enjoy the means of as thorough and effectual a training of their intellectual and moral powers as their parents can afford and the progress of the age will admit? And yet it is our highest social duty to give the greatest advantages to our children. There is no use of property so sacred, so binding. To spend wealth in luxury and show, whilst the minds and characters of the rising generation are neglected, ought to be ranked among the greatest social crimes.

"Our College affords important means for training young men for the professions. But a much greater number of the young in the prosperous classes are destined to mercantile life, and for these no sufficient provision is made. Very many parents, who are unable or indisposed to give their children an education for a profession, are still able to afford them more extensive advantages than are now found in our schools; and to procure these advantages is among their first obligations. If any class of men should be well educated, it is the commercial. In this are found a very large proportion of our most opulent and influential men. None do more to determine public measures and to give a character to the community; and yet how little is now done to train up men of business for this high responsibility!

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* To George Ticknor, Esq.

"Education has three great objects.

"The first is to store the mind with useful knowledge, by which we mean, not only such as will have a direct bearing on the business of life, but such as will be a foundation of further acquisitions of knowledge, and of a wise use of leisure, in all future years.

"The second, which is still more important, is to give force to the intellect; to give it the command of all its powers; to train it to labor, to concentration of thought, to patient and accurate investigation, to broad views of subjects, to the true methods of reasoning, and to soundness of judgment.

"The third and most important object is to fix those great principles of duty, and awaken those sentiments, which will insure the right and honorable use of the knowledge and the intellectual vigor of which we have spoken. We all feel that to quicken the mind of a child to this powerful and noble action is to confer the greatest good. We can conceive none greater.

"That our present schools do much good, in giving habits of order and industry to the child, is cheerfully granted. But they are designed for the first years of life, and dismiss the child before he becomes conscious of his powers, or can exert them vigorously on the most important subjects.

"It is believed, that, after the training of our common schools, two years should, if possible, be devoted to the study of branches which have a direct tendency to task, strengthen, and elevate the mind. These branches are, — 1st, Natural history and philosophy; 2d, Civil history; 3d, Moral science, including both intellectual and moral philosophy; 4th, Politics, including the principles of government generally, and of our own constitution in particular, political economy, the true interests of our country, &c.; 5th, The Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion, and the general principles of interpreting the Scriptures.

"This course should be decidedly *philosophical*, that is, it should aim to lead the mind to the comprehension of great principles in every department; at the same time it should have a *practical* character, by teaching how all knowledge may be applied to the formation of a virtuous character, and to the discharge of our duties as citizens and members of families, as related to the human race and to God. Two years' faithful study of the branches now enumerated would not only store the mind with important truth, but would awaken new life and energy, and probably give a new character to the life.

"The question now comes, How shall this better education be given to young men not destined to the liberal professions?

"It has been hoped by some that this education may be given by Harvard University, which has an extensive apparatus, capable of teaching many more than are now benefited by it. Some have thought that the University might give in this city such a course of instruction as is needed. It has been thought by others, that, whilst the instruction is given in Cambridge, the young men may reside with their parents in town. Others, again, favor the plan of a new institution, designed expressly to prepare young men for mercantile life, and for a right use of the influence which commercial prosperity bestows.

"There is one difficulty attending all these plans. It will be asked, How can a better education be given to young men who are not destined to the professions, without interfering with their preparation for business? How can the course of study now recommended be reconciled with apprenticeship? The proposed branches require some maturity of mind. Can the higher ones well be commenced before sixteen years of age? How shall the young be occupied before that time? And will sufficient time be left for apprenticeship?

"These questions demand the deliberate attention of men of business of liberal and enlarged minds. They should be looked at fairly. They present real, but not insuperable, difficulties. Society is undoubtedly ripe for an improvement on our present means of education. Men of intelligence and resource, acquainted with active life, can undoubtedly frame a plan for giving greater advantages to the young without doing violence to the present order of things. We need only to feel that the progress of a community is to be measured, not by its numbers, and much less by its wealth, but by its provisions for enlightening and invigorating the mind, for carrying the people forward in intelligence, virtue, refinement, and religion, for training up generations worthy the name and privileges of *freemen.* We need only to feel, that, without such provisions, prosperity is a show, and may prove a curse; and with such convictions, we should find no great difficulty in introducing a better system than the present.

"There is a particular call for attention to this subject at the present moment. It is understood that the Corporation of the College are now deliberating on the question, whether the College, whilst especially devoted to the preparation of young men for the professions, may not also give a valuable education to those who are looking forward to other pursuits."

"*June* 10, 1834.* My dear Sir, — The discussions of the last evening and the preceding showed very plainly that the only practicable method of improving our system of education at present is, to enlighten and excite parents, to lead them to feel what they can and ought to do on this point. I hope, therefore, that the result of these discussions will be the exhibition of our leading views to such parents as may be able and disposed to act on them. I have accordingly put these views on paper, and inclose them to you. It seems to me that if a circular of this kind could be placed in the hands of men of business who have children needing a better course of instruction, and especially if it should bear the signatures of the gentlemen who attended our meetings, an important step would be taken towards our object.

"I say a circular of *this kind*, for I have no desire that this paper should go abroad. It expresses, perhaps, the views of the writer in some respects more strongly than others might think expedient. Will you put it into Mr. Gray's hands, and converse with him on the subject?

"I shall be pleased to have any or no use made of it, as shall be thought best. If you and Mr. Gray would prepare something, more would be accomplished.

"I trust there will be some result from our interview.

"Very sincerely, yours."

"CIRCULAR.

"At a meeting recently held by a few gentlemen chiefly engaged in commerce, to inquire whether provision cannot be made for the more liberal education of boys designed for active life, several views were taken which it is thought may be usefully communicated to the public.

"It was the opinion of all present, that boys need not enter upon their apprenticeship in the counting-room before sixteen or seventeen years of age; that four or five years of apprenticeship, preceded by good instruction, are fully adequate to the preparation of a young man for business, and that, consequently, two or three very important years of life are now lost by the habit of beginning apprenticeship at the age of fourteen.

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* To Hon. Nathan Appleton.

"It was the opinion of all, that gentlemen who declined to send their sons to college, as being an institution not suited to prepare them for active life, are bound to give them a better education than they now receive; and still more, it was believed that in general they are desirous to do it; — so that the suggestion of any practical method can hardly fail to be adopted by at least a sufficient number to insure a fair experiment.

"It was the opinion of all, that gentlemen having the means should not rest until they have provided for their children the most extensive and liberal instruction which is consistent with effectual preparation for their future calling; that the object should be, to train and prepare them not only for the acquisition of property, but for the intelligent and faithful performance of their duties as freemen, citizens, and heads of families, for the support of our public institutions, for a wise and honorable use of property, for the improvement of their minds according to their opportunities through their whole lives, and for the exertion of a salutary influence on public opinion and on all the great interests of society. It was thought that every man of property should educate his sons, as far as possible, to be decidedly useful members of the community, to contribute to its progress in knowledge, sound morals, and the elegant arts, and to bear a part in securing to us the honorable distinction of being an intelligent, well-principled, and highly civilized people.

"It is plain that an education suited to this end must comprise, among other branches, a more extensive teaching of the history, constitution, government, and interests of our country, and of moral science as applicable to commerce and to all the relations of life, than is at present given in any of our institutions.

"As to the means of accomplishing this great good, it was thought that the present English High School, a very valuable institution, might be so extended as to give all the advantages which are needed; or, if this be impracticable, that a private school of a new character might be established. Twenty parents, by subscribing one hundred and fifty dollars *per annum*, might secure to as many children extensive and liberal instruction of inestimable importance, and fifty, by subscribing the same sum, might accumulate still greater aids for their children; and it cannot be doubted that there are many parents among us whose enlightened affection would prompt them to take part in such an enterprise, if commenced under favorable auspices.

"On one point, there should be from the beginning a thorough understanding. The object being to form men truly efficient in business and in all their connections with society, the proposed school must be understood to be a place for thorough teaching and for as laborious study as the health of the young will permit. A strict discipline, preparatory to the restraints and labors of the counting-room, and insisting on faithful application, must be one of its distinctions, and every pupil must distinctly feel that his continuance in it will depend on compliance with its laws and a good use of its advantages."

1835.* "I suggested for consideration a means of making college more extensively useful, namely, the establishment of a regular course of instruction for those who do not incline or have not opportunity to study the languages, who

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[*] To Josiah Quincy, LL. D., President of Harvard University.

do not wish to be trained for one of the professions, but who can command time and money, and have capacity for a higher instruction than is given in any of our schools. I proposed that this course should extend through two years; that it should comprehend moral and political philosophy, political economy, the principles of our own government, and the physical sciences, and that the teaching in these branches should be as thorough as that now given in college.

"The present system at Cambridge seems to me very important, and I wish to extend, instead of narrowing it; but I feel strongly the importance and need of another course, which will be at once practical and philosophical, and which, by dropping the more ornamental branches, will not be too extensive for many now excluded from college. I believe that such a course would have an immense influence on those who should pass through it, and would do much to raise the intellectual character of the community. A young man who should spend two years in philosophical studies, in continuous investigation of the laws of moral and material nature, would become intellectually a new man. This systematical application of the mind for the acquisition of general principles is much more worthy to be called philosophical education than the study of language, and I wish that as many young men as possible may enjoy the benefits of it.

"The *education of the people* seems to me more and more to be the object to which the College should be directed. This institution has always existed, and exists now, for the people. It trains young men, not so much for themselves, as that they may be qualified to render services to the community; and perhaps they render no higher service than by spreading their own intelligence and giving a higher tone to the public mind. Cannot the College do more for this end? I hope it may. If it can furnish a course of philosophical instruction which can be pursued by a greater number than now pass through college, if it can extend the demand for this higher education by supplying its means, and if it can give a rank to those who enjoy this advantage, it will render inestimable service to the community.

"Perhaps the most important inquiry for the friends of the College is, How can it become a popular institution, an object of public interest, without narrowing at all its present course of instruction? Its well-being requires that the community should look to it as their friend and benefactor. I do not, however, think so much of the prosperity of the College, in the suggestions now made, as I do of the general improvement of the people. Popular education is a more important interest than any particular institution, — involving, as it does, the religious and political as well as intellectual good of men. The progress of society can hardly be aided more than by bringing greater and greater numbers under the influence of moral and philosophical instruction. I wish that the College may take an active part in this great work. It has an extensive apparatus of means. Can it not render them more productive?

"As to the plan proposed now, I have no partiality to it. Let the end be accomplished, and I care not for the means. My aim is rather to bring the subject before more experienced and practical men, than to define the mode of action. I see one objection to my suggestion in the present habits of society. I refer to the fact, that the young, who do not go to college, are generally bound to some business at or before the time when the course which I have recommended would begin. I know, too, that an innovation of this kind will not be generally adopted at first. The question, however, is, whether there be not a growing desire and demand for such a course of instruction as is now recommended. Society seems to me to be tending to this point, and here is my hope of success.

"Whilst in this way something may be done to bring the

College to bear more on the community at large, it becomes a question whether it cannot furnish the means of a higher education than it now affords, whether it cannot send out at least a few more accomplished scholars than we can now boast. I have long looked to a new classification, according to capacity and progress, as the only sure means of improvement in this particular. I would observe, however, that, a few years ago, there was some conversation about the expediency of alluring, by lectures and other provisions, young men, who might afford it, to spend a fifth year at Cambridge, and thus to lay a broader foundation for further studies. . . . . .

"I observed, that it was the desire of several that the Commonwealth should found a school for teachers, as has been done by some governments in Europe, and expressed my opinion that such an institution might be usefully placed in Cambridge. The young men would derive important aid from the apparatus of books, instruments, and instructors; whilst the College, in aiding the great cause of education, would endear itself to the people, and be felt to be a great instrument of the progress of society. I confess, it is my wish to multiply bonds of this kind between the College and the community as far as possible, for the benefit of both. . . . . .

"I trust no change will be made, except by raising the qualifications. The College ought not to be a place for drilling boys in the languages, but should give liberal and critical instruction in the best ancient authors. Is there never to be an improvement in the teaching of Greek and Latin in our schools, so that our sons, on entering college, may be spared their present drudgery? This reform would be a vast benefit, and without it the study of the ancient languages must decline. Can the College do any thing to promote it?

"As to religious opinions, I wish that the public might fully understand, that the students may place themselves under what religious instruction they please on Sunday, and that the instruction which all *must* hear is not at all sectarian, so that parents can nowhere find equal security against the exertion of improper influence over the minds of the young.

"As to moral dangers, I am satisfied that wrong opinions exist in the community. Cambridge is often called an unsafe place for the young. Is any college more free from vice? I believe not. I wish, however, that a moral guardianship might be made more extensive. I have wished that each instructor should be intrusted with a certain number of students, for whose character he should be particularly responsible, with whom he should sustain a friendly communion, into whose habits he should inquire with great care, and with whose parents he should communicate freely, on the first sign of negligence or bad habits. An institution which should be distinguished by a wise moral care would be prized above all others; for, after all, what is literary knowledge, compared with the virtue of our children?"

1836. "I have long seen with much satisfaction the diffusion through our country of institutions for the intellectual culture of the people. I have rejoiced in the establishment of *lyceums* and popular lectures, and I feel that every one is bound to do what he can to forward these good works. By this I do not mean that I consider such institutions in the present form as fitted to meet all our wants. The lectures are too disconnected, and too generally intended for mere amusement, to stir up the minds of the hearers to any strong and enduring activity. But we must not despise the day of small things. A lyceum or young men's association, though liable to the charge of giving superficial knowledge, is still a promise, a harbinger, of something higher. It is a sign that the people are beginning to hunger for more refined pleasure and increasing knowledge. It shows that intellectual life is at work and spreading through the community. Such an omen I hail with joy. As a people, we have been, and still are, given too exclusively to outward goods, to accumulation of property, to general indulgence. We hardly seem to have discovered that we have minds of heavenly origin, and created for endless progress. The body, not the thinking soul, has been our care. Any thing which shows that we are waking up to the greatness of our own spirits, and desire to improve them, is a good sign, and must be welcomed by every Christian and friend of his race. In this view, I rejoice to hear, as I travel, that lyceums and similar institutions are springing up in the land, and if a good word will help them onward, no one is free to withhold it.

"At the foundation of every good institution there lies some great idea, which ought to be understood. On what idea does your association rest? It is that of *human progress*, that of man's capacity of *intellectual growth.* Here, indeed, is the grand thought on which all religious, moral, and intellectual institutions rest. Your institution is undoubtedly established for the pleasure it will bring, and it is useful as offering an innocent recreation. But were this all, it would be of little moment. A consciousness of the greatness of the soul in every human being is the foundation of the lyceum."

But it was for the Common Schools that Dr. Channing felt the deepest and most anxious interest. On their success he saw that the fate of our free institutions, in a great measure, depends. Every effort to cleanse these fountain-heads of popular virtue and intelligence met, therefore, with his most cordial sympathy and uncompromising aid. And few events within his immediate neighbourhood ever gave him such immediate and lasting joy, as when the Hon. Horace Mann resigned his high position in the political world, and, turning from prospects which would have bewildered the judgment of most men, consecrated his rare powers of heart and head to the cause of the education of the people. While partisans and worldlings smiled or scoffed at what seemed eccentric disinterestedness, Dr. Channing addressed to Mr. Mann the following brief letter of congratulation and encouragement.

" *Newport*, August 19, 1837. My dear Sir, — I understand that you have given yourself to the cause of education in our Commonwealth. I rejoice in it. Nothing could give me greater pleasure. I have long desired that some one uniting all your qualifications should devote himself to this work. You could not find a nobler station. Government has no nobler one to give. You must allow me to labor under you according to my opportunities. If at any time I can aid you, you must let me know, and I shall be glad to converse with you always about your operations. When will the low, degrading party quarrels of the country cease, and the better minds come to think what can be done towards a substantial, generous improvement of the community? 'My ear is pained, my very soul is sick,' with the monotonous yet furious clamors about currency, banks, &c., when the spiritual interests of the community seem hardly to be recognized as having any reality.

" If we can but turn the wonderful energy of this people into a right channel, what a new heaven and earth must be realized among us! And I do not despair. Your willingness to consecrate yourself to this work is a happy omen. You do not stand alone, or form a rare exception to the times.

There must be many to be touched by the same truths which are stirring you.

"My hope is, that the pursuit will give you new vigor and health. If you can keep strong outwardly, I have no fear about the efficiency of the spirit. I write in haste, for I am not very strong, and any effort exhausts me; but I wanted to express my sympathy, and to wish you God-speed on your way. Your sincere friend."

Dr. Channing's readiness to coöperate in Mr. Mann's labors, as Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, was proved a few months afterward, when he attended a Convention for establishing a County Association for the Improvement of Common Schools at Taunton, and followed Mr. Mann's splendid and eloquent address with quite a long extemporaneous speech. A very imperfect newspaper report is the only remaining record of these remarks; but a few extracts will serve to show the quality and extent of his interest in the noblest institution of our republic.

"On the second resolution Dr. Channing observed, that he valued the common schools because they were common, — because they were for the promotion of universal education. We have a few chosen institutions, where the select branches of learning may be pursued by their respective votaries, but the most interesting of all our literary institutions are for the common people. He desired the education of this or that man, not merely because of his office, his station, or natural genius, but because he is a man, — has a mind capable of endless improvement, and may claim this privilege as his birthright.

"We are told that this or that man should have an extensive education, but that another, who occupies a lower place in society, needs only a narrow one, — that the governor of a state requires a thorough education, while the humble mechanic has need only to study his last and his leather. But why should not the latter, though pursuing an humble occupation, be permitted to open his eyes on the lights of knowledge? Has he not a soul of as great capacity as the former? Is he not sustaining the same relations as a parent, a citizen, a neighbour, and as a subject of God's moral government? To educate a child is, in fact, a greater work than to perform the duties of a governor. What is it? It is to take the direction of mind, to cultivate the powers of thought, and to teach the duties which we owe to God and to our neighbour. Can a parent teach his child these duties, unless he has learned them himself? Every one, no matter what is his occupation or place, needs an education, in order that he may have the proper use of his powers, and be enabled to improve them through life.

"Some say, were these views of education to prevail, there would be little or no work done; manual labor would fail. But for the purpose of working effectually, one should be intelligent; he will bring the more to pass, because he labors for some known object, and is stimulated by motives which he understands and feels. Will ignorance make one labor more? Compare the labors of the slave, whose mind is depressed and dark, with those of the enlightened farmer or mechanic. A manufactory could not be carried on by a set of slave-operatives. Simply on account of their ignorance, they would be disqualified for such a trust. There are many mechanic arts which, for their proper execution, require intelligent, well-educated minds.

"We want worthy laborers, who exalt themselves while they benefit others. The circumstances in which they are placed are fitted to call forth their mental powers, to awaken thought, and to impress them with their responsibilities.

They are brought into intimate connection with their fellow-men, and, if qualified by education, may exert over them, even in the humble walks of life, a most salutary influence.

" He said, that, on the same principle that he would educate one, he would educate all. The poor man, as to his natural capacity, does not differ from others. He is equally susceptible of improvement, and would receive as great advantages as others from a well-bestowed education.

" Other views, he said, made him desire that education might be diffused among all classes. Our institutions demand this general diffusion. They are for the common mass of the people ; and unless the people are educated, they both lose the benefit of these institutions and weaken their power. Liberty requires that every citizen, in order to its proper enjoyment, should have the means of elevation.

" Again, all participate in the sovereignty of the country. Men in other countries have been fighting to be sovereigns. Here every man is one. Every citizen participates in legislating for the Commonwealth and in administering the government. Ought not every man who has such duties devolving on him to receive as liberal a training as possible ?

" For the sake of union this should be done ; especially in our country, where there are no titled orders, born to higher privileges than others. In other countries, the class in power have the principal means of knowledge, and, in order to keep the civil power in their hands, their object is to withhold from others the means of mental improvement. But according to the genius of our government, education must bring all conditions and all classes together.

" He said, in proportion as men are educated, they are more on an equality as to property. They communicate together, maintain a more agreeable intercourse, live in more harmony and in greater love. Barriers are broken down ; and society by its general culture is raised to a higher state of refinement and happiness.

"He desired all to be educated. If only a few were educated, it would be no disgrace for the rest to remain in ignorance; as in some ancient countries, while the great mass of the people could neither read nor write, unacquaintance with these arts was no disparagement. But in this country, where most are educated, it is a deep disgrace for the rest to be ignorant, and left degraded, and assimilated to a brutal mode of existence.

"He thought that education should reach to the most depressed, that the obligation of carrying it through every grade of society should be felt. Especially should this be done because we are a manufacturing people, for the manufacturing business is not congenial to the advancement of mind, but, on account of its sameness, and the uniformity of its operations, keeps the mental powers in a narrower compass. Whereas the farmer, by surveying natural scenery, and trying new experiments in nature, is more conversant with objects eliciting genius and thought.

"He could recollect, that, forty years ago, in passing through this town to Newport, his native place, when it took two days to travel there from Boston, he usually stopped in this village for the night, and that he took great pleasure then in viewing our beautiful waterfalls, verdant lawns, and fields. But now what a contrast! Instead of the beauties of nature, he beheld the wonders of art, — splendid manufactories. When he looked at them, and considered how many hundreds of human beings they employed, he said to himself, Are they schools for developing and improving minds? or are they mere institutions of wealth?

"He rejoiced that we had colleges liberally endowed, and he would not divert from them one stream of bounty. But he thought more of the mass than of the few, and wanted men educated for the community at large, and not for themselves alone. He rejoiced that we had academies, and that they were rising in importance; but he felt a deeper interest in the common schools. He desired the education of all the citizens, not as a politician, or as one seeking public favor; he was a candidate for no office; but he desired it as a man, a friend to his race.

"He affirmed that the common schools have not kept pace with our wealth; that it is more essential to the prosperity of a school that it have a good teacher, than it is to the prosperity of a nation that it have wise and able rulers. We have in many of our schools teachers who do honor to the name; many, he regretted to say, were untaught and incompetent. They were not so much to blame, because they were not furnished with those means for qualifying themselves which every other profession provides for those who would enter it. He most deeply regretted that our legislature had not appropriated their surplus funds last winter in establishing an institution for teachers. How much more good those large funds would have done! He hoped no more would come into their hands to be disposed of as these had been.

"He could speak from experience. He was for some time in early life a teacher, and he ever felt pain in remembering his deficiencies. Though he had no reason to suppose he was then behind others in the same employment, yet the remembrance of his lack of skill in discipline, and ignorance of the modes of access to the youthful mind, ever gave him deep regret. He had not, while filling the responsible station of teacher, learned how to make education a pleasure to a child.

"But an institution for teachers is not all. There must be funds raised to pay them for their laborious services. How strange that the man who has the care of our children should be thought to hold so low a place! But it must be seen and felt that his services are of vital importance and deserve a generous recompense. In Prussia, where education has made great progress, teachers are obtained easily and at a moderate expense, because other lucrative occupations are not open to them. In this country other occupations afford higher wages, and therefore that of a teacher has not risen to the honor of a profession. No good teacher can be obtained without ample compensation. Boston, though recently disgraced by its mobs, is doing much in compensating its teachers, is giving as great a salary to one of its teachers as to its mayor.

"How is Massachusetts, he asked, to sustain its high character and rank? Look on the map and you perceive how diminutive it is in size, compared with many of the other States. What is to prevent this little State from falling behind others which have greater natural advantages, and losing its influence? Nothing but cultivating the minds of its citizens, cultivating them in learning and virtue. On this foundation its eminence and greatness will stand firm.

"We are known, he said, to be a money-getting people, industrious, economical. But rather than let his child want education, a man should prefer living himself in the humblest manner, scarcely allowing himself clothing or food.

"He came here, not to speak, but to hear. He desired to express his sympathy with the Secretary of the Board of Education, whom, without offering any flattery, of which he was incapable, he knew to be eminently qualified for the great cause in which he was engaged. He blessed God that he had undertaken it; he cheered him on; and it was ever his prayer that Heaven would give him success."

The views indicated in these remarks led Dr. Channing to use all his influence to raise the profession of a teacher to its rightful position of honor in the community, and consequently he took every suitable occasion to aid the Normal Schools. How strong was his desire to prepare teachers fitly for their responsible function appears in the following letter.

"*Newport*, August 24, 1841.* I understand that a wish has been expressed that your letter to me on the Normal School at Lexington should be published. I wish it may be, and shall rejoice if others may read it with the same delight which it gave to me. Your picture almost realized the ideal I have formed of a school. The relation of parent and child between Mr. Pierce and his pupils is to me one of the most beautiful views of the institution, for it must be confessed that the ordinary connection between teachers and taught is any thing but love; and where this is wanting, the intellectual development must be very defective. The unhappiness is, that the understanding nowadays works so little in union with the moral affections, that our schools and higher seminaries act so partially on the soul. The *precision*, which, as you say, distinguishes Mr. Pierce's teaching, is of essential and special importance in a normal school. All of us who have been instructors know how much we failed, at first, from want of precise ideas on subjects which we thought we understood. We had to become learners, to bring our vague ideas to a new clearness, before we could make them tangible to our pupils.

"But I will make no comments on your statement. It gave me new confidence in normal schools. I have felt, as you well know, a deep interest in their success, though perhaps you do not know all the reasons of it. I began life as a teacher, and my own experience has made me feel the importance of training the teacher for his work. I was not more deficient than most young men who pass through college. Perhaps I may say, without presumption, that I was better fitted than most to take charge of a school; and yet I look back on no part of my life with so much pain as on that which I gave to school-keeping. The interval of forty years has not relieved me from the sorrow and self-reproach which the recollection of it calls forth. How little did I do for the youthful, tender minds intrusted to me! I was not only a poor teacher, but, what was worse, my inexperience in the art of wholesome discipline led to the infliction of useless and hurtful punishments. I was cruel through ignorance; and this is the main source of cruelty in schools. Force, brute force, is called in to supply the place of wisdom. I feel myself bound to make this confession as some expiation for my errors. I *know* the need of a normal school. I speak not from speculation, but sad experience.

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* To Miss Mary T. Peabody.

"But, indeed, does it not stand to reason, that, where all other vocations need apprenticeship, the highest of all vocations, that of awakening, guiding, enlightening the human soul, must require serious preparation? That attempts should have been made in the legislature to break down our normal schools, and almost with success, is one of the most discouraging symptoms of our times. It shows that the people will not give their thoughts to the dearest interests of society; for any serious thought would have led them to frown down such efforts in a moment. I rejoice that the friends of education are beginning to visit the Normal School at Lexington. I earnestly implore for it the blessing of Heaven. With sincere affection, yours."

Dr. Channing's zeal, however, in the cause of popular education did not blind his discrimination, and he was very jealous of any movement which, while honestly designed to foster schools, might, in any way, endanger intellectual freedom. This care to keep the atmosphere of thought fresh and clear thus manifested itself in a letter to Dr. Dewey.

"I have just been called on by Mr. Holbrook, the gentleman so devoted to lyceums, to obtain my name for the furtherance of his plans. I like his object much, but one method of securing it seems to me very objectionable. I refer to the project of a great national society. I am unwilling to intrust in the hands of a few men the power of moving such a vast machine. If there is any subject on which a variety of minds should be employed, and a variety of experiments made, it is education. The effect of these great associations is to produce servile uniformity. The multitude defer to a few, and these few very seldom lose all selfish ends in a great object. And even if they do, they obstruct the good work just as far as they interfere with independent thinking and acting through the community. Am I wrong? If so, instruct me. It grieves me that I am perpetually taking views of subjects which prevent co-operation with others. I have no desire to stand alone, and on education I should joyfully do and suffer any thing in my power. But the rage for great societies seems to me one of the diseases of the times, and if they do not prove substitutes for civil or political means of coercion and religious establishments, I shall be glad.

"You seem to be one of Mr. Holbrook's right-hand men, and, as one of the initiated, you must tell me whether I am right or wrong. I am too busy to think or talk much of the subject, as my illegible letter may show. Write soon, for I shall have another visit from Mr. H."

While thus earnest to diffuse among all classes the means of intellectual culture, and to introduce a system of instruction adapted by its philosophical and practical character to form sound and capacious minds, Dr. Channing saw with regret the exceeding difficulty of securing moral development, the growth and discipline of the affections, in our schools and colleges, as at present conducted. He was most solicitous, therefore, to encourage every movement which was directed to calling into vigorous action the spiritual powers of children. The clear conviction, that health of conscience and will is the only sure source of inward strength and outward efficiency, made him look with the liveliest hope upon the methods of training adopted by Mr. A. Bronson Alcott, when, in 1834, that fine and much-misapprehended genius attempted in a select school to illustrate and verify his original views of human culture. The following letter shows with what sincere friendliness he watched an experiment so worthy of adequate trial, but so prematurely cut short by unjust impatience in the community.

"*Newport*, August 24, 1835.* I intended to write you a long letter, but my house is full of friends, who leave me no leisure. I thank you for your 'Record,' which I read with great pleasure. I have still doubts; but the *end* sought is the true one, and I earnestly desire that the experiment should be made.

"I want proof that the minds of children really act on the subject of conversation, that their deep consciousness is stirred. Next, I want light as to the degree to which the mind of the child should be turned inward. The free development of the spiritual nature may be impeded by too much analysis of it. The soul is somewhat jealous of being watched; and it is no small part of wisdom to know when to leave it to its impulses and when to restrain it. The strong passion of the young for the outward is an indication of nature to be respected. Spirituality may be too exclusive for its own good.

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* To Miss E. P. Peabody.

"I have suggested these difficulties in conversation, and repeat them here, not to discourage the experiment, but to insure its success. No one has more interest in it than myself. Mr. Alcott's reverence for the spiritual is the *first* great qualification of a teacher, and I want it to be so combined with other qualifications, and so manifested, as to give a new tone to instruction. Your chapter on General Principles * interested me much. It is full of fine thoughts, but the lights are somewhat too scattered. Your great idea is stated without the requisite modifications. You set out from happiness, a dangerous point of departure, for the whole selfish philosophy has grown from the error of placing enjoyment before morality. But I have not time to say more.

"Let my remarks be a proof to you, not of my love of fault-finding, but of my deep interest in your work. I had a very agreeable visit from Mr. Alcott, and only regret that so much of the time was spent in controversy."

From all the views thus presented of education, it will be seen that Dr. Channing had a perfect trust in the adaptation of the human intellect to truth. Reason in God and man he conceived to be essentially the same principle, and acknowledged that the universe in all its laws of order was exactly correlative to the Ideas of Divine Wisdom. The whole of life, then, he clearly saw, was meant to be a medium of development and information, whereby intuitive ideas and experience might be reciprocally confirmed and fulfilled. Society should become, he thought, a high school of mutual educators, pervaded by the sunshine of general illumination, and for ever stimulated by fresh influxes of truth, wherein old and young, rich and poor, elevated and depressed, should interchange their hopes, conjectures, discoveries, science. Any check, then, upon freedom of inquiry and expression he looked upon with peculiar disgust and dread. This hatred of intellectual constraint, and confidence in the capacity of the public to discern light amidst even the grossest errors, showed itself in a manner that subjected him to no little misunderstanding and abuse on one occasion, which may deserve, therefore, a special notice.

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* Printed in the first edition of "The Record of a School."

In January, 1834, Mr. Abner Kneeland, who, from being an Orthodox minister, had become successively a Universalist and an Unbeliever, and had established himself in Boston as the head of a society of "Free Inquirers," and editor of their organ, the "Investigator," was indicted at the Municipal Court. The indictment was for blasphemy in having published in his paper of December 20th, 1833, *three* articles:—1. A scurrilous extract from Voltaire, ridiculing the miraculous generation of Jesus; 2. An article declaring the practice of addressing prayers to God to be absurd; 3. A letter from the editor to the editor of the "Trumpet," in which he says,—

> "Universalists believe in a god which I do not; but believe that their god, with all his moral attributes, (aside from nature itself) is nothing more than a chimera of their own imagination."

On this indictment Mr. Kneeland was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to three months' imprisonment. He appealed to the Supreme Court, and at the November term of 1835 the appeal was brought before Judge Wilde. When the case came on, Mr. Kneeland declined to admit, as on his previous trial, that he was editor of the Investigator, or any other facts necessary for the government to prove. The attorney-general, James T. Austin, not being prepared with his proof, proposed to Mr. Kneeland, that, if he would admit the authorship and publication of the *third* article, as just quoted, the government would not ask for conviction on the other two articles, but would use them only argumentatively, as illustrating the defendant's motive and intent in denying God. This proposal was accepted; but as Mr. Kneeland had no counsel, and was little skilled in legal proceedings, the first and second articles were not struck out of the indictment. This was unfortunate, as it served to complicate the case, when it came before the public through the newspapers, and prevented a sound and sober judgment upon its merits. But the authentic report of the proceedings at the trial plainly shows the understanding of all parties. The attorney-general said that "he relied on the passage quoted in the judge's report ["Universalists believe in a god," &c.] to sustain the prosecution, the other words recited in the indictment being referred to only as explanatory of this particular passage, and as evidence of the motives with which it was written and published."* Again he said: — "The denial of God, whether in decent language or otherwise, is prohibited."† And Judge Wilde makes this express and conclusive statement in his report: — "I instructed the jury that the wilful denial of the existence of any God, except the material universe itself, would be a violation of the statute." Mr. Kneeland was finally sentenced, in 1838, to two months' imprisonment; and what he was convicted of, as undeniably appears by the instruction of the judge to the jury, was, that he had *wilfully denied the existence of God.*

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* Pickering's Reports, Vol. XX., p. 209.

† Ibid., p. 211.

Immediately after the conviction, Ellis Gray Loring, Esq., an earnest friend of freedom and opponent of oppression, determined, after consultation with Dr. Channing, Dr. Follen, and other like liberal-minded persons, to draw up a petition to the governor of the State for the remission of Mr. Kneeland's sentence. The petition, as amended by Dr. Channing's suggestions, was as follows: —

" *To his Excellency, the Governor of the Commmonwealth of Massachusetts:*

" The undersigned respectfully represent, that they are informed that Abner Kneeland, of the city of Boston, has been found guilty of the crime of blasphemy, for having published, in a certain newspaper called the Boston Investigator, his disbelief in the existence of God, in the following words: —

> " 'Universalists believe in a god which I do not; but believe that their god, with all his moral attributes, (aside from nature itself) is nothing more than a chimera of their own imagination.'

" Your petitioners have learned, by an examination of the record and documents in the case, made by one of their number, that the conviction of said Kneeland proceeded on the ground above stated. For though the indictment originally included two other publications, one of a highly irreverent, and the other of a grossly indecent character; yet it appears by the report, that, at the trial, the prosecuting officer mainly relied on the sentence above quoted, and that the judge who tried the case confined his charge wholly to stating the legal construction of its terms, and the law applicable to it.

"In these circumstances, the undersigned respectfully pray that your Excellency will grant to the said Kneeland an unconditional pardon for the offence of which he has been adjudged guilty. And they ask this, not from any sympathy with the convicted individual, who is personally unknown to most or all of them; nor from any approbation of the doctrines professed by him, which are believed by your petitioners to be as pernicious and degrading as they are false; but

"Because the punishment proposed to be inflicted is believed to be at variance with the spirit of our institutions and our age, and with the soundest expositions of those civil and religious rights which are at once founded in our nature, and guarantied by the constitutions of the United States and this Commonwealth;

"Because the freedom of speech and the press is the chief instrument of the progress of truth and of social improvements, and is never to be restrained by legislation, except when it invades the rights of others, or instigates to specific crimes;

"Because, if opinion is to be subjected to penalties, it is impossible to determine where punishment shall stop; there being few or no opinions in which an adverse party may not see threatenings of ruin to the state;

"Because truths essential to the existence of society must be so palpable as to need no protection from the magistrate;

"Because the assumption by government of a right to prescribe or repress opinions has been the ground of the grossest depravations of religion, and of the most grinding despotisms;

"Because religion needs no support from penal law, and is grossly dishonored by interpositions for its defence, which imply that it cannot be trusted to its own strength and to the weapons of reason and persuasion in the hands of its friends;

"Because, by punishing infidel opinions, we shake one of the strongest foundations of faith, namely, the evidence which arises to religion from the fact, that it stands firm and gathers strength amidst the severest and most unfettered investigations of its claims;

"Because error of opinion is never so dangerous as when goaded into fanaticism by persecution, or driven by threatenings to the use of secret arts;

"Because it is well known, that the most licentious opinions have, by a natural reaction, sprung up in countries where the laws have imposed severest restraint on thought and discussion;

"Because the influence of hurtful doctrines is often propagated by the sympathy which legal severities awaken towards their supporters;

"Because we are unwilling that a man, whose unhappy course has drawn on him general disapprobation, should, by a sentence of the law, be exalted into a martyr, or become identified with the sacred cause of freedom; and, lastly,

"Because we regard with filial jealousy the honor of this Commonwealth, and are unwilling that it should be exposed to reproach, as clinging obstinately to illiberal principles, which the most enlightened minds have exploded."

The name of William Ellery Channing stood first upon this petition, when presented, followed by one hundred and sixty-seven others. It was made known to the public through the newspapers, and most bitterly attacked. A remonstrance against the petition was prepared and extensively signed. And, to conclude this brief history of the affair, the petition was rejected by the Governor and Council. But, nevertheless, it exerted a wide and permanent influence. It was an assertion by Christians of the equal rights of atheists to freedom of thought and speech. It did a good work in educating the public mind. And there will never, in all probability, be another prosecution for atheism in Massachusetts. Dr. Channing's views are very simply exhibited in the following letters.

"*March*, 1838.* My dear Sir, — I should have noticed your letter relating to Kneeland's case earlier, had I obtained the information which I have thought necessary. I have not yet gained it, but write a line of acknowledgment, that you may not think me indifferent to the matter. My impression is that Kneeland was not convicted for his opinions, but for assailing in obscene and contumelious language the opinions which are most dear and sacred to all around him. I thought his offence lay wholly in indecent and insulting scoffs. My intention is to see and converse with Judge Shaw on the subject. That a man should be punished for his opinions would be shocking, — an offence at once to the principles and feelings of the community.

"I have always thought, that, in petitioning for a pardon, we are bound to inquire whether the Executive has a right to pardon. I suppose this power to be given to the Governor to meet cases of crime which are accompanied by peculiar circumstances of mitigation, and not for the suspension or virtual repeal of an unjust law. The law must be executed, unless something peculiar in the case calls for the pardoning power. On this principle, I should doubt the propriety of petitioning. You understand this subject better than I do, and I should like your views. Very truly, your friend."

"*Newport*, July 1, 1838.† I see Kneeland's case is making a noise. I expected that much offence would be given, and of consequence am not troubled. In these cases I feel that no man can harm me, but by impairing my love to him, by inspiring bad feelings. It is a comfort to me to find that I can be reproached without any desire to reproach, without casting off the injurious man. I have, as I think, an increasing compassion for those portions of society which I am called particularly to oppose. I see more and more how little they comprehend the spiritual life which Christ came to give, how rooted they are to the earth, how swallowed up in the outward, how blind to the true dignity of the human soul; and I would cheerfully spend and be spent for their recovery to a better mind. I wish to sustain a hostile relation to no human being. As to human favor, I feel more and more that it must be given up. If I know Christianity, it is so at war with the present condition of society, that it cannot be spoken and acted out without giving great offence. The want of the Christian spirit, of Christ's spirit, towards our fallen fellow-creatures is most mournful. I would drink of it more freely."

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* To Ellis Gray Loring, Esq.

† To Joseph Tuckerman, D. D.

"*Newport*, July 6, 1838.* My dear Sir, — I have had a letter from —— leading me to suppose that it is the decided opinion of your legal brethren, as well as of the community at large, that you fell into an error as to the ground of the sentence passed on Kneeland. On this point I am no judge, having received my impression from your examination of the case. If, on reconsidering the matter, you should think that Kneeland was convicted on the counts which you supposed had been abandoned, I think that the error should be acknowledged. Nothing is to be yielded to clamor or numbers; but if we have made a mistake, let us say so. The petition shows that we desired a remission of the penalty on the ground that he was suffering for opinion alone. I certainly had no doubt on this point. That you were governed by the purest motives in giving this view of the case, I have never doubted. It may be the true one, for aught I know; for the impressions received by —— in moving in a particular circle are any thing but decisive, and at this distance I can form no judgment. The newspapers are no authority, and my friends have not written to me about the affair, with the exception I have named. What I wish is, that you would review the whole ground with the new lights which discussion may have given, and if you have reason to think that the views given by you to me are erroneous or doubtful, so that the ground on which the petition rests fails, I wish that this may be made known to the Executive, if the petition has been presented, or that the petition may be stopped, if not presented. I infer from what I hear that I have had my measure of reproach, and that little probably will be withdrawn in consequence of any step we may take. My single aim is to *do right*, to confess error where we have fallen into one, to keep my mind open to truth. You, of course, feel a peculiar responsibility, because the petition was signed on the ground of your representations; but with purity of purpose you will not sink under it. Very truly, your friend."

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* To Ellis Gray Loring, Esq.

The same determination to uphold perfect freedom of opinion and expression showed itself in Dr. Channing's mode of action, when the distillers and traders in intoxicating drinks attempted to silence the Rev. John Pierpont, or to expel him from Hollis Street pulpit. "Sir," said he to that brave, resolute, and skilful champion for temperance and freedom, at the time of his most fiery trial, "should this struggle in your society result in some ten or a dozen of your most active opponents withdrawing from your church, and in others who sympathize with you and sustain your course taking their places, Hollis Street pulpit will stand the highest in the city." The following considerate and respectful, yet frank, letter was addressed to Mr. Pierpont at the time when the vote passed by a majority of the "proprietors of the pews," requesting Mr. Pierpont to take up his connections with the Hollis Street Society, had been reversed, and when he was about resuming his duties. It is as beautiful a tribute of Dr. Channing's regard for a much-injured brother as it is a valuable memorial of his own magnanimity.

"*Friday Evening*, November 15, 1839. My dear Sir,—I have taken much interest in the conflict you have recently gone through, and rejoice that you are to return to your pulpit under circumstances so encouraging and honorable. On the next Sunday I suppose that you will address, not only your own congregation, but a multitude, who will be drawn together by the peculiarity of the occasion; and will you allow me to say, that I trust that the services will breathe such a spirit of philanthropy and piety, and such a calm reliance on great principles, as will satisfy all that personal triumph has not been your aim, but that you have been and are truly devoted to the highest good of the congregation and the community. I wanted to call upon you, but am detained by a cold which has almost taken away my voice. I write, because I feel that you are to exert an important influence, and I have an earnest desire that it should be for good. I hope that these suggestions may not seem unreasonable. If they should, you will at least allow me to express my gratitude and respect for your courage and fidelity in a noble cause. Very sincerely, your friend."

One reason for Dr. Channing's earnest desire to uphold Mr. Pierpont's hands in the Hollis Street controversy was, that he saw in the persecution of that honest preacher by a band of moneyed men allied by interest an exhibition of tendencies which were everywhere working throughout modern society. It was very clear to him, that the danger was pressing, of a complete subservience of politics, the press, public opinion, and the pulpit to the insidious tyranny of wealth. The predominance of the commercial and fiscal spirit over moral enthusiasm, spiritual aspiration, humane sentiment, and intellectual freedom, was, in his view, a most alarming symptom of the mad fever after money with which the whole age was sick. His tone of thought upon this subject may be best learned from the following letters.

" *St. Croix*, March 17, 1831. I was a little disappointed at finding that you set down the idolatry of wealth as the besetting sin of Philadelphia. I thought there was more of the old-fashioned aristocracy in that city, and that birth weighed more than money. I am glad you feel so distinctly and strongly the degraded condition of what are called the highest classes. Amidst some refinements of manner, they are so wanting in elevation of sentiment, in perception of spiritual excellence, in the consciousness of their solemn obligations to the less favored classes of society, that it is time for the friends and ministers of enlightened religion, laying aside equally all flattery and all bitterness, to seek their reformation by every instrument of persuasion, reasoning, and heart-searching reproof. I hope you will make no compromise with wickedness in high places. There it is intrenched, and thence a pestilential influence spreads through the whole mass. I write too fast to weigh my words; but I am not in a cynical fit; I give you my deliberate convictions."

" *July* 12, 1831.* The darkest spot in the aspect of your country is the depressed, half-famished state of your lowest classes. This may be relieved by the new impulse given to manufactures and trade; but I fear that it is not an *accident* of your system, but a *necessary effect* of your present artificial state of society, and that it will soon recur again. If this be so, great changes should be made in society to avert it. To communicate the intelligence and blessings of the higher classes to the lower should be the end and sure result of all social institutions, and they are essentially defective where such is not their operation. I am a leveller; but I would accomplish my object by elevating the low, by raising from a degrading indigence and brutal ignorance the laboring multitude. If I know what Christianity and philanthropy mean, they teach no plainer lesson than this."

" *Boston,* September 6, 1835. The cry is, 'Property is insecure, law a rope of sand, and the mob sovereign.' The actual, present evil, the evil of that worship of property which stifles all the nobler sentiments, and makes man property, — this nobody sees; but appearances of approaching convulsions of property, — these shake the nerves of men, who are willing that our moral evils should be perpetuated to the end of time, provided their treasures be untouched. I have no fear of revolutions. We have conservative principles enough at work here. What exists troubles me more than what is to come.

" We must not, however, be unjust to the present. In our body of Christians I certainly see higher modes of thinking and feeling than formerly, and there is a good deal of the spirit of religion in the community. Unhappily, sectarianism prevents the religion of the country from exerting its just influence. There is such a dread of its becoming a usurper, that it is not allowed to speak in public affairs. Still, if it lifts the minds of any number above sordidness and selfishness, it will prove itself to be a redeeming power. What offends me most is the wisdom which scoffs at all attempts to improve society, derides freedom, and wraps itself up in epicurean ease. I have inflicted quite a dissertation on you."

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* To Mrs. Joanna Baillie.

"*Boston*, May 6, 1836.* I wanted you to see our people freely, of all descriptions and denominations. I fear you will go away without knowing enough of the most important classes; that is, the middle and laboring. The boast of our institutions is, not that they form a better aristocracy, — for ladies and gentlemen, I suppose, are much the same all the world over, — but that they spread more intelligence, self-respect, and happiness through the mass. . . . . .

"I do mourn over this foolish, wasteful ostentation, not merely for general reasons, but because it stands in the way of the particular social progress which belongs to us as a people. This passion for display is directly hostile to the comprehension and recognition of the true relation of man to man; and without this, our present low civilization will continue."

"*Newport*, September 8, 1837. I never despair, but I have no great hope of any immediate result from what I have done. The newspapers in Boston, I am told, remain silent. The people are absorbed in the currency question, so that it is not thought best to attempt to get up public meetings. I hope one benefit from my letter. It will lead some, perhaps many, to apply more than they had done the principles of Christianity to morals, and religion to political subjects. This is no small gain. I attach so much importance to the individual mind, that I am richly recompensed when even a few receive good impulses. To turn the tide, in our country, is a thing out of the question. A nation which is seized by an idea will act it out and exhaust it. The idea of *wealth*, — of greatness by gain, — of material grandeur, — has possessed our people, and they are certainly working wonders with it. They are pouring a stream of civilization, of a low order to be sure, over this continent with marvellous rapidity, and they are intoxicated with success.

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* To Miss Harriet Martineau.

" But, as I say, I have no despair. No idea can possess a people exclusively. Human nature is too vast, various, generous, to be wholly mastered by a low passion. There are many among us struggling against the material chains which bind the community, and every convert to spirituality and true freedom does something to prepare the revolution which must come. I say it *must come.* The very violence of an impulse tends to exhaust it. Human nature cannot work one way for ever. Its great end, self-development; is silently going on, even when it seems to contract itself most. New wants unfold themselves by degrees, and the mind never acts with greater energy than from a new spring in an opposite direction to that which it has long followed.

" I have been led to throw out these hints, because some of your remarks were discouraging. I would have you feel the greatness of the evil, but not so as to despond, or so as to put forth spasmodic efforts against it. You are more in danger of the last than the first. Your letter gave some indications of a state of mind which I know by experience, and which leads to desperate efforts. Let us work calmly and wisely, as well as resolutely. Could I see, before I die, but a small gathering of men penetrated with reverence for humanity, with the spirit of freedom, and with faith in a more Christian constitution of society, I should be content. Thus far I have found comfort in occasional manifestations of this divine impulse; but those in whom it appears are as yet lost in the crowd, have not found one another out, and do little to strengthen one another's hearts and hands. I am sure, however, that this spirit of humanity will not die, — that it will spread, — and I thank God for having reason to believe that my faint voice has done something to wake it up.

"I am sorry you are to leave New York, not for your own sake so much, but because I had hopes that a society might be gathered there on a new plan, or in a new spirit. I shall rejoice to have you in Boston, though I am not sure that it is the best place for you. So little is doing or aimed at here, that a young man is in danger of losing all aspiration."

"*February* 24, 1837.* I cannot but think that our city is open to good impulses. Religion is better understood, and more extensively operative. The harvest is great, but the true laborers are wanting. Undoubtedly, the mad pursuit of wealth is resisting and counterworking good influences; but this misdirected activity is better than torpor.

"We have been trying to persuade the legislature to appropriate a part of the surplus revenue to education, but in vain. Money is thought better than intelligence, and the cupidity of the ignorant and poor, and the indifference of those above them, are dooming us to intellectual and moral depression. There are, however, generous spirits among us, thirsting for a better state of things, and the desire of improvement cannot be long limited to the lowest interests of life."

"*Boston*, April 3, 1837.† I have heard of your lectures, and beg you to carry into effect your purpose of publishing. I think the people are open to good impressions, though, undoubtedly, the last triumph of Christianity will be over the spirit of accumulation.

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* To Joseph Tuckerman, D. D.

† To Orville Dewey, D. D.

"I am sometimes almost tempted into the literal construction of the Christian precepts on this subject. It would be better for the world to be somewhat pinched for food and clothing, through an exaggerated spirituality, than to contract their whole souls into money-getting.

"I wish I could write you very encouraging accounts of our intellectual and moral condition. The whole mind of the country seems absorbed in its pecuniary interests, and, though active enough in this sphere, is not acting very beneficially. I feel more and more how little Christianity is applied to life. Its views of life, of property, of the end of human existence, of the relations between man and man, how little are they understood! We ought not to be satisfied with our present modes of operation. No sect can boast of doing much."

"*Boston*, December 1, 1838.* Can you recommend any books which treat of the distribution of wealth, and which particularly consider the question, how the most equal distribution may be effected in consistency with private rights and industry? The subject has always been to me beset with difficulties. The tendency of all societies is to the depression of the multitude of men, and freedom promises no remedy; for, leave men to the free use of their powers, and their differences in skill, capacity, industry, necessarily produce shocking contrasts.

"I have lately seen some extracts from the seventh volume of Marshall's 'Statistics of the British Empire,' in which he makes the inhabitants of the three kingdoms amount to twenty-four millions, all of whom are devoted to a condition of unremitting laborious exertion for subsistence, excepting two hundred and seventy-five thousand belonging to the highest classes. In the introduction to the sixth volume, he sets down among the alarming circumstances of the times 'the progressively increasing privation and degradation of a great portion of the population amid a progressive accumulation of capital.' What is the authority of this book? If it be good, and I fear it is, what view of society ought to draw more the attention of the good and wise?"

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* To Miss Harriet Martineau.

"*Newport*, September 11, 1839.* When I saw ——, she spoke of a subject in which I have much interest, and that is, the want of good manners in our rural population. I feel it, and wish much that the evil may be remedied. When we look at this part of the community from a distance, we think better of them than they deserve; and persons who allow themselves to judge by the exterior are led to think worse of them than is just. The remedy is not to be found in teaching good manners, as they are called; for the unrefined, in trying to catch these, often make themselves ridiculous, or, if they succeed, how little do they gain by overlaying selfish passions with superficial courtesies!

"The spirit of good manners is what they need, and what 'the respectable' need everywhere; and this lies deep. Is it not that reverence and love for human nature which is hardly known as yet in our moral code? We need more definite views of social defects, and of their cure. I am more and more struck with the amount of misery flowing from the bad passions and madness of the less cultivated classes."

1839. "The rich man has no more right to repose than the poor. He is as much bound to labor as the poor; not to labor in the same way, but to labor as really, as efficiently, as intensely. I am tempted to say more intensely, because he has a sphere so much wider and nobler opened to him. No man has a right to seek property in order that he may enjoy, may lead a life of indulgence, may throw all toil on another class of society. This world was not made for ease. Its great law is action, and action for the good of others still more than for our own. This is its law, and we violate it only to our own misery and guilt."

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* To Dr. Charles Follen.

Dr. Channing's keen perception of the corrupting influences which the universal thirst for gain is exerting upon the whole of Christendom, and each Christian community, made him look with sympathizing respect, though with anxious scrutiny, also, upon every movement that promised to introduce more just relations of industry and property. His hopes and fears are plainly enough presented in the following letters.

"*St. Croix*, April 6, 1831.* I have not seen a poor man. Slavery and pauperism do not live together. I have thought this view of slavery favored Owen's social system, for the two have some common features. The slaves are fed from a common stock, work on common ground, have their labors assigned by a superintendent. The differences are, that Owen's superintendent is a select committee; here, it is a master; and according to Owen the whole community share alike, whilst here the master monopolizes almost every thing.

"The wrongs of slavery are, indeed, infinite; and yet such are the effects of joint labor and of a common stock, that the large population of this little island — say twenty-five thousand over a surface twenty-eight miles long and six broad — are fed and clothed sufficiently well for labor and health. The system, bad as it is, excludes paupers. The orphans, the old, and the sick — making with the children one third, perhaps — are as well supported as those who labor.

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* To Joseph Tuckerman, D. D.

"I do not approve Owen's means; but his end, which is to insure the comforts of life to every member of society, and to do this by moderate labor, is earnestly to be desired. He would accomplish it by merging the individual in the community. I would do it by increasing the power of the individual, including in this term moral even more than intellectual power, though the last is essential. I confide less and less in artificial arrangements, and have little hope but from the diffusion of intelligence, energy, disinterestedness, sympathy, and self-control through the mass.

"Accordingly, I look on you as a most useful laborer in the vineyard. Go on; be strong in body and mind, and prosper. You will now ask what I am about. I have done very little, though I have not been idle. My thoughts turn much on the state of the world. That a new era is opening on us, or that the fuller development of the present is before us, we cannot doubt. I wish I could help men to understand the present age, that they might coöperate with its good tendencies and withstand its evil ones. But this is a great work."

"*Boston*, March 31, 1832.* I find you attach some importance to St. Simonism. I have regarded the system as chiefly political; and in this view it is a serious matter. It shows, as does Owen's system, and the coöperative system, that the old principles of property are to undergo a fiery trial, that the monstrous inequalities of condition must be redressed, and that greater revolutions than the majority have dreamed of — whether for good or evil — are to be anticipated. The religion of St. Simon, as far as I know it, is of little worth. The very notion of a hierarchy shows his childishness on this subject. It is impossible that he can connect religion with social duty as closely as Christianity does; for it is impossible for any system to connect man with God as this does, and no substantial social improvement can take place till this connection is understood."

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* To William Burns, Esq.

"*Boston*, February 27, 1841.* My dear Sir, — I received your 'Constitution and Exposition' yesterday, and my early reply will prove my interest in your proposed 'Fraternal Community.'

"Your *ends*, *objects*, seem to me important. I see, I feel, the great evils of our present social state. The flesh predominates over the spirit, the animal over the intellectual and moral life. The consciousness of the worth of the human soul, of what man was made to be, is almost wholly lost; and in this ignorance all our social relations must be mournfully defective, and the highest claims of man very much overlooked. I earnestly desire to witness some change, by which the mass of men may be released from their present anxious drudgery, may cease to be absorbed in cares and toils for the body, and may so combine labor with a system of improvement that they will find in it a help, not a degrading burden. I have for a very long time dreamed of an association, in which the members, instead of preying on one another, and seeking to put one another down, after the fashion of this world, should live together as brothers, seeking one another's elevation and spiritual growth. But the materials for such a community I have not seen. Your ends, therefore, are very dear to me.

"How far you have adopted the best *means* of realizing them, and whether they can be realized in the present low condition of individual Christians, are different questions, and most men would give a negative answer. I do not, however, discourage any sincere efforts for social or individual improvement, but would say, God speed you! There is a tone of faith and sincerity in your document which gives me hope, and yet I cannot say that I am without fear. I have lived so much out of the world of business, I have had so few connections with society except those of a religious teacher, that I cannot judge of the obstructions you are to meet. The grand obstacle to success, however, I do understand, and you ought to look at it fully. It consists in the difficulty of reconciling so many wills, of bringing so many individuals to such a unity of judgment and feeling as is necessary to the management of an extensive common concern, — in the difficulty of preventing the interference, intermeddling, harsh-judging, evil-speaking, self-will, jealousies, exactions, and love of sway, which scatter discord and woe through all our social relations. The Catholics have provided against these evils in their religious communities by establishing an absolute power, and teaching the members that the first duty is obedience. Whether sufficient unity can be preserved in a free institution, built on the foundations of brotherhood and equality, remains to be proved. I wish you to try it, and, in order to success, I wish you all to look the difficulty in the face, and to feel that it is indeed a great one, — to be overcome only by habitual self-denial, by the special culture of humility, meekness, and charity.

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* To the Rev. Adin Ballou, Mendon, Mass.

"There are undoubtedly dangers attending every social condition. These we are to understand, that we may watch against them. The evils to be feared in a community like yours are, the loss of individual energy in consequence of dependence on the community, the increased facility given to the sluggish of throwing the burden of toil on their better-disposed brethren, the relaxation of domestic ties in consequence of the virtual adoption of the children by the community, the diminution of free thought and free action in consequence of the necessity of conforming to the will of the majority or the intendant, the tendency to narrowness and exclusiveness, and the tendency to a dull monotony of mind and life in consequence of confinement to a few influences. These evils are not imaginary. There is danger of losing in such establishments individuality, animation, force, and enlargement of mind. Your security must be sought in carrying out the principles of freedom and philanthropy to which you attach so much importance.

"I am aware of the many economical advantages arising from the gathering of the community into one habitation; but there are disadvantages. There is reason to fear, that families will not be sufficiently separate, and that the domestic feelings may thus be impaired; and, perhaps, still more, that individuals will lose that spirit of solitude, retirement, secret thought and secret piety, without which social relations are full of peril, and the character loses strength and dignity. These dangers seem to me to require distinct guards.

"I should have been pleased to see in the articles some recognition of the importance of courteous manners. The importance of these, in keeping alive mutual respect and kindness, is great. In this country we suffer much from coarseness of manner. Refinement, mutual deference, delicacy in intercourse, are among the fruits of Christianity, and very needful in such a gathering as you propose. If I were to visit a community, and see the floor defiled by spittle, I could not easily believe that the members respected one another, or that, with such violations of neatness and decorum, there could be much aspiration for inward purity. Just in proportion as Christians come to recognize in one another the spiritual, immortal children of God, an unaffected deference will mark the tones of the voice and the manners, and the reaction of this deference on the sentiment from which it springs is very great. Where such deportment prevails, there will be no difficulty about reproof. Kind, courteous reproof, which is seen and felt to come from love, does not wound. Indeed, in such a society there will be little to reprove.

"I trust that this letter will be a testimony of my sincere interest in your movements. I pray God to bless you. I should die in greater peace, could I see in any quarter the promise of a happier organization of society. I am burdened in spirit by what I see. May the dawn of something better visit my eyes before they are closed in death!

"When you visit Boston I shall be glad to see you.

"Your friend and brother."

"P. S. I ought, perhaps, to say, that I am not prepared to subscribe to all the articles of your 'Declaration'; but I do not blame those who hold them for making them the foundation of the community. It should be understood, however, that you do not limit your *Christian communion* to those who agree with you in all these points. You can and ought to recognize as Christians very many with whom you have no desire to live on the same farm and in the same 'habitation.'"

"*July*, 1841. Perhaps no part of your letter gave me more pleasure than your account of Mr. Alcott. He little suspects how my heart goes out to him. One of my dearest ideas and hopes is the union of *labor* and *culture*. The present state of things, by which the highest and almost the only blessings of life are so often denied to those who bear its heavy burdens, is sad, and must be changed. I wish to see labor honored and united with the free development of the intellect and heart. Mr. Alcott, hiring himself out for day-labor, and at the same time living in a region of high thought, is, perhaps, the most interesting object in our Commonwealth. I do not care much for Orpheus in 'The Dial.' His flights there amuse rather than edify me; but Orpheus at the plough is after my own heart. There he teaches a grand lesson; more than most of us teach by the pen.

"As to Mr. Brownson, you know how deeply I sympathize with him in his feeling towards what he calls the 'masses,' — an odious word, as if spiritual beings could be lumped together like heaps of matter, — but I have little patience with his article.* In regard to the workingmen, — including farmers, mechanics, domestics, and day-laborers, — he exaggerates their hardships in this country. In truth, it may be doubted whether they have not the easiest lot. Take our young lawyers and physicians, and see their struggles, disappointments, and the difficulty of establishing themselves in their professions. See nine out of ten merchants failing, perhaps again and again. Look at our young women, as well as those in advanced life, who are reduced to dependence by the decline of their families. Look at the literary class everywhere. In what other class have so many been starved? How few, in the laboring classes have suffered more than you have done! At this moment, who suffers more than ——, toiling for her family in her state of health? Your father, too, in a profession, finds it as hard to get work as any laborer in the streets. How often have I known professional and mercantile men toiling anxiously through the night, and sacrificing health, whilst the laborer has been wrapped in oblivion of all his cares! The truth is, that as yet life is a conflict. I expect it to be so hereafter. My own constitution was broken by early toils. We all have a hard battle to fight. To me the matter of complaint is, not that the laboring class want physical comforts, — though I wish these to be earned by *fewer hours* of labor, — but that they live only for their physical nature; that no better justice is done to their souls; that in early life they receive so few quickening influences; that labor is a badge of inferiority; that wealth forms a caste; that the multitudes are cut off from communications which would improve intellect, taste, manners; that the spirit of brotherhood does not bind different conditions together.

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* The first on the Laboring Classes.

"As to Mr. B.'s remedies, they are shocking or absurd.* What can come from war, bloodshed, a death-struggle between rich and poor, but universal poverty and woe? How foolish to talk of abolishing the law of inheritance, and dividing the estates of the dead among the people! What parents would leave estates under such conditions? How certainly would property pass from men's hands before death! No good can come but from the spread of intellectual and moral power among all classes, and the union of all by a spirit of brotherhood. This moral renovation is itself the supreme good, and brings all others in its train. I am sorry that Mr. B. has thrown away his influence by this article. The folly of the Whigs in spreading the article, drawing attention to it, identifying it with a party, raising up partisans for it, is of a piece with the general course of these blind conservatives. . . . . .

"I was truly glad to hear that Dr. Walker understands the spirit of our alarmists. It is truly a spirit of unbelief. Men who think that a lecture is to subvert Christianity, and an article in a review to make a wreck of property, show a want of faith in religion and society more alarming than the infidelity which they condemn.

"But let us learn tolerance towards all parties. We are all ignorant and erring. Some of us stand out of the crowd, and see the follies of all classes. Our very insulation, however, may expose us, in turn, to great weaknesses. Over all of us watches a wise, paternal, infinite Love. The sight of this will blend hopes with the tears, complaints, and rebukes which present evils call forth. Farewell and prosper, and, what is better, learn to live without prospering."

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* In his second article, Mr. Brownson showed that what he sought for was greater equalization of means as the condition of moral elevation, and that he nowise recommended, but only *prophesied*, a revolutionary movement.

Thus does it appear how deliberate were Dr. Channing's expressions, how weighty with conviction his words, when, in the Preface to the third Glasgow edition of his works, he thus summed up his creed as a social reformer.

1839. "These volumes will show that the author feels strongly the need of deep social changes, of a spiritual revolution in Christendom, of a new bond between man and man, of a new sense of the relation between man and his Creator. At the same time, they will show his firm belief, that our present low civilization, the central idea of which is wealth, cannot last for ever; that the mass of men are not doomed hopelessly and irresistibly to the degradation of mind and heart in which they are now sunk; that a new comprehension of the end and dignity of a human being is to remodel social institutions and manners; that in Christianity, and in the powers and principles of human nature, we have the promise of something holier and happier than now exists. It is a privilege to live in this faith, and a privilege to communicate it to others. The author is not without hope that he may have strength for some more important labors; but if disappointed in this, he trusts that these writings, which may survive him a little time, will testify to his sympathy with his fellow-creatures, and to his faith in God's great purposes towards the human race."

Seeing thus clearly that a radical reform was near at hand which would transform the past relations of capital and labor and the prevalent usages of caste and privilege, Dr. Channing looked forward with serene and unfaltering trust. Let this chapter close, then, with the bright prophecies of this watcher on the mountains.

" *Boston*, March 29, 1832.* I should rejoice to be in England at this moment of deep excitement. Your influence on the cause of civil and religious liberty through the world is so great, that I look towards you with much solicitude. What I earnestly hope for you is, that you may pass, without convulsions and bloodshed, through the agony of the great revolution which threatens the civilized world, and which no human power can avert. Perhaps I hope too much. Of the result, however, I cannot despair."

1833. "These are all signs of the times, of a struggle of old and new elements, and of the impossibility of getting repose by keeping things as they were. They will not stand still. We must find a deeper foundation. Can we not discern amidst all changes immutable laws which must triumph, which promise a better age, and to the resistance of which we owe our sufferings? Is not a higher will than ours done?"

" *Boston*, July 29, 1836.† My dear Sir, — You write of the agitation and excitement in your country. I look on this state of things in the Old and New World calmly, not only from a general trust in Providence, but from considering the causes of excitement. It is the progress of intelligence, arts, wealth, and especially the waking up of men to the rights of human nature, to which we are to ascribe the present heaving agitation of society. That there are perils in such a period we see. Men open their eyes to discover great abuses, and learn their rights only to learn how they have been trodden under foot. They have the presentiment of a better state of things, and imagination founds on this extravagant expectations which it burns to realize in a moment. Here are dangers, but it cannot be that the development of the highest powers of human nature can ultimately prove any thing but good. I rejoice, — not, indeed, without trembling, — but still rejoice."

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* To Mrs. Joanna Baillie.

† To Wm. Rathbone, Esq., Liverpool.

"*July*, 1838.* My work of this kind, I hope, is over. Not that I think of repose; the longer I live, the more I have to do; but other fields of labor are open to me. We live in glorious times in one respect. Was there ever so much to do? Our age is a revolutionary one, in the best sense of the word, — not of physical, but moral revolution. Higher ideas of the social state and of human perfection are at work. I shall not live to see the harvest, but to sow in faith is no mean privilege or happiness. Ever your friend."

"*Newport*, August 10, 1838.† —— says, you and he have talked about a newspaper. If one is started, I hope it will take the right ground. It must not be a party paper. Its great object must be to maintain *freedom* and to promote *progress*. Its object must be to spread the spirit of our free institutions, to vindicate them from reproach, to show their claims to confidence, to breathe into the young a generous devotion to them, to resist encroachments on them, by whatever party, to plead for the people, to uphold the rights of every injured and oppressed man, be he who he may, to encourage plans for the elevation of the many, to bind together in fraternal union all conditions and classes, and to awaken sympathy with all efforts for liberty, with the friends of humanity everywhere. We want a new tone, that of universal justice and philanthropy, to characterize the paper. I know the question is, whether such a paper can find support. If ably conducted, it would. If conducted no better than other papers, it would fail. For myself, I trust that a new body is growing up amongst us, of men of principle, who, if gathered together, would be strong enough to command respect from the selfish parties which divide the country, and who would thus act powerfully on public affairs. Can nothing be done to make them known to one another, and to give voice to their conviction?"

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* To Dr. Charles Follen.

† Ibid.

"*Newport*, September 23, 1839.* The present is a new era, and there must be jarring, till the new and the old have had time to adjust themselves to one another. The new spring given to human activity, the new connection of nations, the new sense of power in the mass of the people, these and other elements of our present condition must be accompanied with a good deal of trouble, till we have got used to them, and learned how to manage them. The wisest of us are poor prophets in such a transitionary state of things; but it is easy to see some grand elements at work. I cannot doubt that the impression of present evils is very much increased by that new feature of society, *publicity*. Now we know every thing done and suffered, and know the worst. What a dark veil covered the woes and crimes of the past!"

"*September* 10, 1841.† The late untoward events to which you refer do not discourage me as much as they do you. I expect the people to make a great many mistakes. It seems the order of Providence, that we should grow wise by failures. Sometimes we learn the true way by having first tried every wrong one. I see vast obstacles to be overcome. To reconcile freedom and order, popular legislation and an efficient executive power, manual labor and intellectual culture, general suffrage and a stable administration, equality and mutual deference, the law of population and a comfortable subsistence for all, — this is the work of ages. It is to undo almost the whole past, to create society anew. Can we expect it to be done in a day ?

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* To George Ticknor, Esq.

† To J. C. L. Simonde de Sismondi.

"I see hostile forces on every side. In this country I see false and pernicious notions about democracy, and much unfaithfulness to free institutions. I shut my eyes on none of its dangers, though these seem to me much exaggerated by the friends as well as foes of freedom, in Europe. A dark cloud hangs over the reputation of our country at this moment, and I care not how loud the reproaches are which come to us from your side the ocean. But it ought to be considered, that the commercial crash here, which has distressed and exasperated our foreign creditors, and made them set us down as a nation of cheats, has had nothing to do with our free institutions. It has grown out of the spirit, the epidemic vice of our age, the mad passion for great, sudden accumulation, which has raged everywhere, but has found peculiar temptations and facilities in a new country of boundless, unexplored resources. I, who live here, see that the people after this storm are much as they were before. Many individuals have committed great frauds ; but the great mass are unharmed in character. I trust in those around me as before. A fear as to the stability of property never crossed my mind. Amidst our great commercial distresses, there has been much activity in the cause of morals, religion, education ; and whilst Europe is loading us with all manner of hard names, a real progress is going on in intelligence, temperance, and I hope philanthropy.

"That what you call social science is in its infancy, I feel; and our whole civilization is so tainted by selfishness, mercenariness, and sensuality, that I sometimes fear that it must be swept away to prepare for something better. But amidst these evils, have not some higher impulses been given to the world? Is there not a growing intelligence? Are not great ideas striving, however vaguely, in the common mind? The idea of *human rights* can never be stifled again. True, the vagueness of grand thoughts is perilous; but must they not pass through this stage before they become precise and practical? The spirit of Christianity seems to me to be more and more extricating itself from the pernicious dogmas in which it has so long been imprisoned. Christianity is becoming a new power in society. I expect from these causes no wonderful changes. You and I shall not see the Millennium. The French Revolution may have been but the first volcano; but has not this terrible volcano done good? Is not every government in Europe better administered in consequence of it?

"But I stop. I wanted only to say, that I see bright as well as dark aspects in the times, and that I approach the grave without the gloom which so often gathers over the mind in advancing years. On one subject I wish much to communicate with you, and that is, the condition of the laboring classes, with whom I sympathize much. Important changes *must* take place in their state. They must share more largely in the fruits of their toil, and in means of improvement. How this is to be accomplished is a problem which often exercises my mind. I wish I could see the way growing clearer."

"*January*, 1842.* Did I not look on our present state as merely a *transition* one, I should be tempted to think, that, had we never known a bank, canal, steamboat, or railroad, we should be far better off at this moment. We have been made drunk with the spirit of rapid accumulation, and the imagination has been maddened with prospects of boundless wealth. England is suffering from the same causes. What a comment on the present commercial spirit is the condition of England! Thousands and ten thousands starving in the sight of luxury and ostentation! Does the earth show a sadder sight than this? England seems to be teaching one great lesson, namely, that art and science, skill and energy, and all the forces of nature, concentrated by selfishness for the accumulation of wealth, produce degradation and misery; that nothing but the spirit of Christianity, which is in direct hostility to the present spirit of trade or accumulation, can heal the woes of society. I have faith that this great truth is to be learned, and that the present deformed social state is not to last for ever. Very truly, your friend."

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* To Thomas Thornely, Esq.

"*Boston*, February 7, 1842.* An American, loving freedom and his race, cannot but be shocked, in visiting countries where the spirit of aristocracy has triumphed for ages. But still, a comparison with the past may show that much has been gained, and that great causes are at work for human melioration. At the present moment, the most powerful agent in society is trade, — a very coarse and worldly one, to be sure, — but still, one which is breaking down national distinctions, wearing out prejudices, extending more and more the republic of literature and thought, giving different countries a common interest, and preparing the way for a more rapid diffusion of quickening ideas, as fast as they spring up in gifted minds. Is it not also forming everywhere a middle class, a power to balance the aristocracy, and which must seek protection in liberal principles?

"I know the corrupting influence of the passion for accumulation, and I should groan, were I to think that the present social state was to last for ever. But may not the quickening of industry, the multiplication of material comforts, and the progress and new application of physical science, be necessary preparations to the extension of intelligence, and of a spirit of improvement through the now neglected masses? The changes, often rapid, which are now produced by discoveries in the arts, and by new commercial movements, favor the love of change, and especially give to men a tendency to apply principles of all kinds to practice. The worlds of speculation and action are found to be nearer to each other than had been supposed. The idea of a better state seems less a dream. I have spoken of trade, and I might name in connection with this the press and purer conceptions of Christianity, which seem to me growing forces in society.

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* To Harmanus Bleecker, Esq.

"The want of faith in improvement, which you deplore, is the darkest symptom. Much of this, I am sorry to say, is to be found here, but chiefly among what are called 'the better classes.' These are always selfishly timid, and never originate improvements worthy of the name. That the French Revolution should be followed by a great reaction on the Continent in favor of the old and established cannot surprise us; but I have a feeling that men's minds cannot relapse, after that shock, into the old lethargy. Are not great ideas more recognized? Liberty and equality may be dreaded or derided; but has not the idea of *Rights* taken a new hold on men's minds? Is the common man as unconscious of the injuries he suffers as formerly? Is not the notion, however vague, of the true and only proper function of government unfolding, and is not a new standard silently establishing itself, by which rulers are to be tried?

"The want of faith in man, which you speak of, is melancholy, as it springs, in a great measure, from moral dissoluteness, and from want of faith in God and Christ. These do throw a cloud over the world. But man is never to be despaired of. I have an unshaken hope, founded first on the providence of God and the promises of his word, and next on Human Nature. There is an infinity of resource in the human soul. The French Revolution is in one sense encouraging. It shows us a seemingly old, worn-out nation, rising all at once into the fiery enthusiasm of youth. We can never say that our nature is exhausted. It breaks out suddenly into new and most unexpected forms. We have a remarkable testimony to this truth in our country. At this moment, the whole country is shaken by the temperance movement. A reform of the most desperate drunkards — such as we should have called a miracle a few years ago — is spreading everywhere; and this work began in a dram-shop at Baltimore! Shall we despair of such a race? In England, the Chartists are teetotallers to a considerable degree. The regeneration of Ireland is still more wonderful.

"In such a world, who shall set limits to change and revolution?"

CHAPTER IV.

THE ANTISLAVERY MOVEMENT.

INSPIRED, as Dr. Channing was, with the life of universal humanity, which was quickening the age, with reverence for man, the idea of equal rights, and longing for fraternal relations between all classes of society, he could not be insensible to the crimes and outrages inevitably incident to the system of American slavery. Personal acquaintance, even from early years, with the colored race, had shown him the sensibility, affectionateness, capacity of rapid improvement, energy, both intellectual and practical, and, above all, the strong religious tendencies of the millions of his countrymen, so long kept down by cruel injustice and mean prejudice. He saw that an inhuman institution, originated by the oppressions of the warrior class in the rudest ages, and needlessly perpetuated by the selfish sloth of civilized men, was a wasting disease in the very vitals of this nation, corrupting at once its policy, industry, manners, conscience, and religion. He well knew, too, how steadily this cancer, tampered with by palliatives when it should have been cut out, had grown, and how deeply it had interwoven its roots through the whole texture of the character and conduct of our people. He watched, therefore, with much anxiety the progress of the antislavery feeling in Great Britain, with the hope that the development of a more humane policy in that leading commercial nation would react powerfully upon the United States. In 1828, he thus expressed his desires and apprehensions to his friend Miss Roscoe.

> "I rejoice in the zeal with which the cause of the Africans is espoused among you. On this subject I have had one fear, that too great stress had been laid on the physical sufferings of the slaves. I apprehend that the slaves of our country suffer less than the peasantry in some countries of Europe. The true ground, I think, is, that slavery is a *wrong*, be the yoke lighter or heavier, and that, even where it provides sufficiently for the physical being, it destroys the intellectual and moral being, and utterly extinguishes the hope and capacity of progress. I trust your efforts are to prosper, for nothing can rid us of this curse in this country but a strong moral and religious feeling, and this will be aided by enlightened public sentiment in other countries."

It was while Dr. Channing was in this state of mind in relation to the one monster evil of our land, deploring the insensibility of the North, and meditating upon the means of its removal, yet making no positive steps to reform it, that the necessities of health compelled him to pass a winter in the island of Santa Cruz. He sailed from Boston in the autumn of 1830, at the very time when the uncompromising Garrison — who already, in the "Genius of Emancipation," had uttered the watchword of Abolition — was preparing, as a journeyman printer, at the cost of his daily wages and in extra hours of labor, to write the leaders, set up the types, and, with his own hand, to strike off the first number of the LIBERATOR.

His residence in Santa Cruz supplied just the stimulus which Dr. Channing needed, to revive his youthful recollections of the wrongs and horrors of slavery, to open his heart to the influx of the reform spirit which Providence was infusing, and to prepare him to coöperate efficiently with the antislavery movement. As he frequently used to say, in after years, he then "passed through a regeneration" upon this subject. In the last address which he ever made, he thus bore his testimony to the value of this experience.*

"The circumstance which particularly gave my mind a direction to this subject was a winter's residence in a West-Indian island more than eleven years ago. I lived there on a plantation. The piazza in which I sat and walked almost from morning to night overlooked the negro village belonging to the estate. A few steps placed me in the midst of their huts. Here was a volume on slavery opened always before my eyes, and how could I help learning some of its lessons? The gang on this estate (for such is the name given to a company of slaves) was the best on the island, and among the best in the West Indies. The proprietor had labored to collect the best materials for it. His gang had been his pride and boast. The fine proportions, the graceful and sometimes dignified bearing of these people, could hardly be overlooked. Unhappily, misfortune had reduced the owner to bankruptcy. The estate had been mortgaged to a stranger, who could not personally superintend it; and I found it under the care of a passionate and licentious manager, in whom the poor slaves found a sad contrast to the kindness of former days. They sometimes came to the house where I resided, with their mournful or indignant complaints; but were told that no redress could be found from the hands of their late master. In this case of a plantation passing into strange hands, I saw that the mildest form of slavery might at any time be changed into the worst."

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* Works, Vol. VI., p. 381.

In a note, appended to the first edition of his work on Slavery, but subsequently suppressed, because he was unwilling to divert the attention of his readers from principles to details, Dr. Channing thus recorded some of his recollections. They are of interest, as showing the influences which surrounded him, his habits of observation, and cast of thought.

"I wish to add a few statements, to show how little reliance can be placed on what seem, to a superficial observer, mitigations or advantages of slavery, and how much safer it is to argue from the experience of all times, and from the principles of human nature, than from insulated facts.

"I once passed a colored woman at work on a plantation, who was singing, apparently with animation, and whose general manners would have led me to set her down as the happiest of the gang. I said to her, 'Your work seems pleasant to you.' She replied, 'No, Massa.' Supposing that she referred to something particularly disagreeable in her immediate occupation, I said to her, 'Tell me, then, what part of your work is most pleasant.' She answered, with much emphasis, '*No part* pleasant. We *forced* to do it.' These few words let me into the heart of the slave.

"On this plantation, the most favored woman, whose life was the easiest, earnestly besought a friend of mine to buy her and put her in the way to earn her freedom. A daughter of this woman, very young, had fallen a victim to the manager of the estate. How far this cause influenced the exasperated mother I did not learn.

"I heard of an estate, managed by an individual who was considered as singularly successful, and who was able to govern the slaves without the use of the whip. I was anxious to see him, and trusted that some discovery had been made favorable to humanity. I asked him how he was able to dispense with corporal punishment. He replied to me, with a very determined look, 'The slaves know that the work *must* be done, and that it is better to do it without punishment than with it.' In other words, the certainty and dread of chastisement were so impressed on them, that they never incurred it.

"I then found that the slaves on this well-managed estate decreased in number. I asked the cause. He replied, with perfect frankness and ease, 'The gang is not large enough for the estate.' In other words, they were not equal to the work of the plantation, and yet were made to do it, though with the certainty of abridging life.

"On this plantation the huts were uncommonly convenient. There was an unusual air of neatness. A superficial observer would have called the slaves happy. Yet they were living under a severe, subduing discipline, and were overworked to a degree that shortened life.

"I cannot forget my feelings, on visiting a hospital belonging to the plantation of a gentleman highly esteemed for his virtues, and whose manners and conversation expressed much benevolence and conscientiousness. When I entered with him the hospital, the first object on which my eye fell was a young woman, very ill, probably approaching death. She was stretched on the floor. Her head rested on something like a pillow, but her body and limbs were extended on the hard boards. The owner, I doubt not, had at least as much kindness as myself, but he was so used to see the slaves living without common comforts, that the idea of unkindness in the present instance did not enter his mind.

"The severest blow I ever saw given to a slave was inflicted by a colored driver on a young girl, who, on removing a load of wood from a horse, had let a stick fall against the animal's leg. I remonstrated with the man, as soon as an opportunity offered, against his inhumanity. He said, 'Massa, I have the care of the horse, and manager *lick me* if it get hurt.' This answer explained to me the common remark, that the black drivers are more cruel than the whites. I saw where the cruelty *began.*

"I once heard some slaves, who had been taken by law from their master, singing a song of their own composition, and at the end of every stanza they joined with a complaining tone in a chorus, of which the burden was, 'We got no massa.' Here seemed a striking proof of attachment to the master; but on inquiry into the rest of the song, I found it was an angry enumeration of the severities which they were suffering from the new superintendent. They wanted their master as an escape from cruelty.

"Facts of this kind, which make no noise, which escape or mislead a casual observer, help to show the character of slavery more than occasional excesses of cruelty, though these must be frequent. They show how deceptive are the appearances of good connected with it, and how much may be suffered under the manifestation of much kindness. It is, in fact, next to impossible to estimate precisely the evils of slavery. The slave writes no books, and the slaveholder is too inured to the system, and too much interested in it, to be able to comprehend it. Perhaps the laws of the Slave States are the most unexceptionable witnesses which we can obtain from that quarter; and the barbarity of these is decisive testimony against an institution which requires such means for its support."

Extracts from letters will enable us yet more fully to see how the sad experiences of this winter wrought upon Dr. Channing's mind.

"*St. Croix*, January 15, 1831.* The negroes have what are called the comforts of life, that is, food and lodging of a better quality than the peasantry of Europe generally enjoy. Nor are they, perhaps, as much overworked. They certainly accomplish less, and bear no marks of the emaciation so often produced by care and toil in our own country. The misery is, that their condition dooms them, generation after generation, to a merely animal and unimproving existence, and does as much as can be done to extinguish their intellectual and moral nature. They are, of course, given up to low vices, though the word *vicious* can hardly be applied to them more properly than to the horse, so destitute are they of moral ideas. These vices, joined to their brutal ignorance, entail on them, as you would expect, great physical suffering, so that, notwithstanding their comforts, they cannot keep up their numbers. It is wonderful that the owners do not see that their own interest requires them to cultivate the rational and moral faculties of the slaves. Not only is the negro population decreasing through ignorance and vice, but the loss of property, from the utter want of moral principle among them, is greater than you can imagine. This I see continually, but this does not absorb me. I do not blame the slaveholder alone. I blame the prosperous classes of society everywhere, who are leaving not a few around them to live and die in a darkness and vice little inferior to those of the slaves."

"*St. Croix*, January 20, 1831. This island might be one of the happiest spots on earth, with this delicious atmosphere and fertile and beautiful surface. The time, I trust, is coming, when the most favored regions of the earth will not be given up to oppression and sensuality. As yet, the West Indies have formed a dark page in human history. I know not a spot on earth, where man has done more to countenance the doctrine of total depravity.

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* To Joseph Tuckerman, D. D.

" To-day is Sunday, and in wandering an hour ago on the hills in my neighbourhood, which overlook a beautiful tract of land and sea, I could not but feel how the creation was marred by human guilt. I felt, too, the benignity of Providence in mixing good with evil. I saw the slaves on the different plantations enjoying their leisure, and could not but be grateful for the Sabbath on their account, more than on my own. It is plain that the 'man-servant and maid-servant' were particularly regarded in this institution, and I incline to believe that peculiar stress was laid on *rest* very much on account of the prevalence of slavery at the time.

" I feel much for this class of people. Their lot, after all that is said to excuse it, is deplorable. The very mildness of the climate operates against them. In our country, winter suspends labor ; so do frequent storms. Here is no winter, and seldom a storm ; so that the poor negro, from the beginning to the end of the year, has no intermission of labor, except on Sunday and a few festivals. In Catholic islands, I suppose, the superstition which multiplies festivals is a blessing to the negroes. Here, though they are well fed and have more comforts than the laborers in many countries, their number decreases, — a sure proof that something is dreadfully wrong in their condition ; and, whilst I believe that the evils which waste them are chiefly of a moral nature, I incline to think that this unintermitting toil has a share in destroying them.

" I trust, however, as I said, that causes are at work which are to give a new aspect to this and other oppressed parts of the world. I think that great changes are at hand, and I anticipate happy ones, though I may not live to see them. It seems to me that the claims and rights of human beings, of every human being, are better understood. This is a great step."

" *St. Croix*, February 4, 1831.* Perhaps the only good thing which can be said of slavery is, that it excludes pauperism. The sick, old, and children receive the same allowance as the able-bodied, and you are met by no beggars. Slavery, indeed, is full of evils, but they belong to the condition; nor can they be mitigated, till serious efforts are made for its abolition. Here, the barbarous dialect in which the slaves speak almost cuts off a stranger from intercourse with them. I sometimes understand their grievances, for they pour out their complaints on strangers, but cannot follow up any subject, so as to get out the whole truth. Like the oppressed and wronged of all countries, they are exceedingly given to lying, and I suspect, too, that they often deceive without intending it, through want of definite language. I sympathize with them deeply. This infinite wrong cannot endure for ever in Christendom. It shocks me to think that Christians uphold it, for undoubtedly there are sincere disciples in the West Indies. When I see such strange delusions, I ask myself whether enormities as great and as unsuspected may not lie at my own door. We are slow to believe that we are as blinded as those whose errors amaze us. But I begin to fear that the condition of society among ourselves may seem as shocking to a more enlightened and virtuous age as slavery does to us."

" *St. Croix*, March 10, 1831.† I am more and more satisfied that the great evils of slavery are of a moral nature. It has sore physical sufferings, but these may be traced chiefly to moral causes. I believe that the enemies of slavery have exaggerated the bodily pain inflicted by the master on the slave, and the consequence has been, that the master, conscious of being treated unjustly, has repelled indignantly the interference of the philanthropist. He insists that the negroes are in a better condition than the peasantry of most countries; and so unwise and unrighteous are social institutions almost everywhere, that he has too much truth on his side.

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* To Mrs. C Codman.

† To Miss Jane E. Roscoe.

"The slaves have food in sufficient quantities, and with unfailing regularity, so that the first necessity of life is supplied. They are accustomed to sell a part of their allowance, as well as to supply the market with fruits, poultry, &c., and thus they get the luxuries which they most value, such as tobacco, salt meat, and especially dress. Their appearance shows that they do not suffer from want of food. You never see among the women that haggish, shrunk, toil-worn countenance so common in Switzerland and Germany. As to clothing, the next necessary of life, the climate needs little provision, and they of course suffer less than the laborers of cold climates. On Christmas and New Year's day, a kind of Saturnalia among the slaves, when they visit their master's house, and sing and dance as familiarly as at home, they make quite a display of dress, especially the females, some of whom wear, not only fashionable, but costly articles; and I was told by a female friend who visited their ball, that their costume, their graceful dancing, and general propriety of manners, would not have disgraced a similar festival among cultivated whites. These, however, were the *élite* of the slaves, and borrow their fashion from the house-servants. As to lodging, I suppose there is no comparison between their huts and those in which the bulk of the Irish peasantry live. They want nothing but neatness, to be as well housed as they could desire.

"In regard to labor, they never work as our mechanics and farmers do, who turn off twice as much work in a day. Still, they are overworked, I think, as the laboring classes are in all countries. The hardship in the condition of slaves is, that their toils are not intermitted. The summer is perpetual here, and the sugar-cane requires a year to ripen it, so that the slave toils from the beginning to the end of the year, with none of those intervals of repose which a change of season brings in other countries. Then his labor is forced; he has no interest in it, — gains nothing by it, literally nothing, — the excitements by which Providence intends it should be lightened and cheered are wholly wanting, and this alone adds to it an intolerable weight.

"As to the sufferings of the negroes from cruelty. These are very much diminished, chiefly, I suppose, by the abolition of the slave-trade, which has made the life of the slave more valuable, and, in a measure, by the prevalence of more human feelings, which may be ascribed to the sympathy of Europe with this degraded caste. There is, and must be, cruelty; for the agents of the owner who come into contact with the slaves are generally uneducated, ignorant, undisciplined men, with little principle and strong passions, utterly unfit to be trusted with power; and notwithstanding restraint from the proprietor, they do abuse their power, as well as increase the corruption of the negroes by their immoralities. But I suspect that a gang of negroes receive fewer stripes than a company of soldiers of the same number in your army. They are subjected to a less iron discipline, and, as far as physical condition is concerned, they are not to be compared with soldiers during a campaign.

"Still, they suffer much. But the origin of this is to be sought chiefly in moral evils. Their whole condition tends to degrade them intellectually and morally, to make them little more than animals, to sink them in many respects below the brute. Here is the misery of slavery, nor do I think it can be expressed too strongly.

"What affects me most deeply is the thought, that in these countries called Christian, the largest part of human beings are iniquitously and forcibly reduced to a state which blights their whole nature, forbids all improvement, and entails on them the misery of ignorance and vice. The natural affections are blighted by slavery. Marriage is almost unknown here. For example, on one plantation where I resided, only six slaves were married; on another, but one. Then the mutual dependence which strengthens these affections is unknown. The man has no care of the woman with whom he lives, who draws her allowance and clothing, as he does, from the master, and when he is sick he is sent to the common sick-house, so that the good offices of domestic life find no place. In like manner, the children have no dependence on the parents, nor is the parent charged with the support of the children. He earns nothing for them, and takes no thought for their future well-being. Thus the poor negro is excluded from the primary school which nature has instituted for the affections and the whole character, and the injury is irreparable.

"The like causes are fatal to energy, foresight, self-control. The slave has little more care of himself than the brute. He has no interests to watch over, nothing except his little piece of ground to call forth his powers. He is sure of being clothed and fed, let him live as he may. His condition admits no improvement. The future offers him nothing better than the present. He is therefore the creature of the present, of sense, appetite, passion. He is little raised above the brute in foresight and providence, and more given to the lowest pleasures.

"Another view is, that his condition deranges all his moral ideas. The victim of oppression and injustice from his very birth, he can poorly comprehend the claims of humanity and justice. His whole lot is a school of dishonesty and fraud. All his rights are violated, so that violation of right is to him the order of nature. Accordingly, stealing and lying are as much his vocation as his daily work, nor can he be brought to understand their guilt. Thus the whole intellectual and moral nature is laid waste.

"This is the saddest view of their condition, but the evil does not stop here. Their moral degradation brings on them great physical suffering. You will easily understand how, in the absence of all self-control of the marriage bond, and of motives drawn from the future, and with a great incapacity of looking forward, they should abandon themselves to excess. Licentiousness and drunkenness waste away their health and lives, so that, though they are supplied with the common comforts of life, their number is diminishing. They take little more care of health than children, or rather encourage a degree of sickness, because this exempts them from labor. You will understand, too, how their experience of injustice and unkindness, and the want of domestic culture of the affections, prepare them for injustice and unkindness among themselves. The African race is not characterized by the gloomy, ferocious, vindictive qualities of the North American Indian; yet the slaves are quarrelsome, and add to their other miseries that of mutual injuries and animosities.

"I have wished to give you what seemed to me to be the great evils of slavery. These make emancipation difficult, though they show it to be most necessary; for they are inseparable from slavery. In this degraded condition of the negroes, their friends must proceed with the greatest caution. They are now incapable of self-government, and may bring the cause of emancipation into utter disrepute, if trusted at once with privileges which they must abuse."

"*St. Croix*, March, 1831. Life here flows on almost as monotonously as the sand in the hour-glass. I forget, however, that at this moment the governor, who is of a busy turn and fond of doing something, has waked up the island by a project for placing the whites and the free colored people on a different footing in regard to one another, in fact, for breaking down all distinctions between them. He cannot wash out the colors, and give a middle hue to both by way of reconciliation, but he inclines to give offices indiscriminately to both parties, and to bring them to free association with each other. Now to a West Indian this is a greater imposition than Americans would deem an injunction to invite the colored race to their tables, and to serve under them in the militia, &c. The whole project of the governor is not yet published; but had he aimed to shock the prejudices of the people and to alienate them from his government, he could hardly have contrived a better expedient. I can report no meeting on the occasion, no violent speeches, &c. Discontent here only murmurs in secret. It is too impotent to use menace.

"To an American, this incident is quite a volume on the difference between free and despotic institutions. The governor, by the way, thinks himself on the side of freedom, in asserting the rights of the colored class. But it is quite amusing to see how an absolute governor carries through his projects for freedom. He is expected to invite the colored people to some of his entertainments, for which he has a great taste. On these occasions, the whites whom he may invite will understand the invitation to be an *order*, and those who have the least dependence on the government will feel themselves compelled to attend. In truth, all will find it prudent to go. There would be some heroism in staying away. I ought to add, that, as far as I can understand, the colored people have long had all the legal rights of the proprietors. They hold property, and are eligible to all offices. Nothing but the feelings, or, as the governor says, the prejudices of the whites, have excluded them from society, and from the higher offices."

"*June*, 1831. Abroad I saw a beautiful nature, but it was darkened by slavery. This hung as a cloud over every prospect. I could not even connect the beauty of creation with its Author, as I do at home, for the fruitfulness of every field was the work of slaves, and spoke to me of the degradation of my fellow-beings. I rejoice in the feeling which pervades England on this subject. It has already done much good. I saw its effects in the island where I resided, where, I was assured, a new spirit of humanity was spreading, in the treatment of the slaves; and this I could ascribe only to the philanthropic impulse given to the world by England. I trust you will not stop at any thing short of emancipation; but my own observation taught me a lesson of great caution on this subject. No one, who has not visited the West Indies, can well understand the incapacity of self-government induced by slavery. This is one of the strongest reasons for its abolition, but it shows that abolition may bring with it terrible calamities."

Dr. Channing returned to the United States in May, 1831, and in an address to his society thus opened to them his heart in relation to the inhuman system of whose debasing results he had been a witness.

"*June*, 1831. The most striking feature in the state of society which I have been called to observe is the existence of slavery. This drew my thoughts more than all that was peculiar in the natural world, and though I saw this evil in its mildest form, my conviction of its magnitude grew stronger and more painful. I saw slavery, as I have said, in its mildest form, and I saw that it was not the unmixed misery which it is often declared to be. I recollect that I learned very early in life to repeat the lines of the poet,

'I would not have a slave to carry me,' &c.;

but I never saw the white man carried, or fanned, or regarded with trembling, by the African. The slaveholder tells you, and with a good deal of truth, that the slave is better fed than the peasants in several parts of Europe, nor is he, perhaps, as often overworked. Indeed, his physical condition, though far worse than it should be, is not worse than that of many even in this country. The old severity of discipline is very much relaxed. The lash, though used unjustifiably, is used comparatively seldom, and solitary confinement is found a more effectual punishment.

"Still, I think no power of conception can do justice to the evils of slavery. They are chiefly moral, they act on the mind, and through the mind bring intense suffering on the body. As far as the human soul can be destroyed, slavery is that destroyer. It is a direct war with the high powers and principles of our nature, and sinks man as far as possible into the brute. The slave is regarded as property, treated as property, considered as having no rights, subjected to another's arbitrary will, and thus loses all consciousness of what he is and what he should be. The feeling of degradation enters into the very constitution of his mind. He has no motive for exerting or improving his powers; for, do what he will, his lot remains the same. He works not for reward, but from compulsion; for, work or not, he receives the same support. His wife and children depend on him in no degree, but receive the necessaries and comforts of life from the common master; so that the tenderest and most interesting dependencies of life are broken up, and industry has none of the springs, and is solaced by none of the affections, which make labor here so animated and cheerful. His future can be but a repetition of the past. He has no hopes, and when you add to this the utter ignorance in which he grows up, you will understand how necessarily he yields himself to the present moment, sinks into a creature of sense, continues as improvident as a child, and abandons himself to gross vices. Through these excesses, joined to occasional overworking, the slave population decreases, and disease, debility, and premature old age bring on a dreadful amount of physical suffering. That, under such an education, the sense of justice should be extinguished, — that they whose rights are every moment violated should not be alive to the rights of others, — that slaves should make lying and cheating their vocation, and should congratulate themselves on every opportunity of robbing the tyrant by whom they are robbed, — all this is a thing of course; so that with the sensual are joined the antisocial vices, and they know no restraint save fear.

"I have thrown out these remarks, because I feel that we have little perception of the infinite evil of slavery. I desire earnestly that a new sentiment should be called forth on this subject, for I am persuaded that the prevalent, clear, decided expression of such a sentiment would produce great results. We live at a time when great truths can be expressed nowhere without spreading themselves everywhere. It is astonishing and gratifying to see the influence which just and benevolent sentiments in Europe on the subject of slavery have exerted on the West Indies. The melioration of the condition of the slaves within thirty years is great. I have heard the cruelties which were perpetrated thirty years ago spoken of with horror. A new spirit of humanity has spread among masters, and this has come from the deep interest existing abroad, and especially in England, in the condition of the slave. It is one of the noble distinctions of this age, that thoughts, principles, feelings, fly like the winds from country to country, that philanthropy is found to be as contagious as vice. There can be little doubt that the public feeling of England is to emancipate the West Indies. A right public feeling here, I believe, coming in aid of this foreign impulse, would work as surely on our own country. Slavery cannot live against the united moral convictions and reprobation of the civilized world."

The year 1831 was as eventful as any which the

United States has as yet witnessed; for then was the idea of freedom providentially working in the spirit of this nation at length embodied in the words and deeds of faithful men. From the fatal hour, when, by the compromises of the constitution, the essential principles of the republic were belied, and its professed declarations of justice practically disowned as visionary abstractions, —from the yet more fatal hour of the Missouri compromise, when Northern freemen, bribed, cajoled, bewildered, frightened, yielded up the duties, rights, honor, of their constituents to the dictation of slaveholding politicians trained to tyranny by oligarchical usages,—a rapid deterioration may be traced in the sentiments, opinions, conduct, of all parties throughout our country. Our youthful enthusiasm for liberty was stiffening into a premature decrepitude of wordly prudence. The conscience of the Union, in church and state, in social circles, colleges, and the press, in industry and trade, was palsy-struck. Hereafter, more clearly than at present, will it be recognized, that the Antislavery movement has been, by God's blessing, the means of this people's regeneration.

At the time of Dr. Channing's return, the "Liberator" had struggled through its first six months of precarious support and bitter persecution. It had made itself felt as a quickening power in the very heart of the body politic, and every limb and fibre were beginning to tingle with the consciousness of returning vitality. Mr. Garrison, and the small band of firm and undoubting coadjutors, who saw that the question of the abolition of slavery was one of life or death, had sounded forth their startling summons of "Immediate Emancipation." The delusive hopes excited in thousands of honest hearts, by the scheme of sending back the colored race to Africa, were reluctantly yielding to the proof, that the Colonization Society, however beneficial it might become to a distant continent and a later age, was wholly powerless to redeem the United States from the crime and curse of slaveholding institutions. A new era had opened ; the great political reform of the nation had begun. It was with profoundest gratitude, and yet most anxious apprehension, that Dr. Channing regarded this crisis, which he had so earnestly longed for, — with gratitude, for he could not but recognize the sincerity of the apostles of this new gospel, — with apprehension, for their tones of uncompromising sternness jarred discordantly upon his finely attuned ear. He questioned at once the justice and the wisdom of their course, and found himself, as often before, compelled to stand aloof from a movement with the central principles of which his whole heart was in unison. Might not his own words well have recurred to him in extenuation of what he thought excesses ? "At such periods, men gifted with great powers of thought and loftiness of sentiment are especially summoned to the conflict with evil. They hear, as it were, in their own magnanimity and generous aspirations, the voice of a divinity ; and, thus commissioned, and burning with passionate devotion to truth and freedom, they must and will speak with an indignant energy, and they ought not to be measured by the standard of ordinary minds in ordinary times. Men of natural softness and timidity, of a sincere but effeminate virtue, will be apt to look on these bolder, hardier spirits as violent, perturbed, and uncharitable, and the charge will not be wholly groundless. But that deep feeling of evils, which is necessary to effectual conflict with them, and which marks God's most powerful messengers to mankind, cannot breathe itself in soft and tender accents. The deeply moved soul will speak strongly, and ought to speak so as to move and shake nations." *

Already, while in the West Indies, Dr. Channing had begun to draft the plan and write the first sheets of the work on Slavery, which four years afterward appeared, and to which he proposed at first to give the form of an address to the South. But now it seemed to him that he must bide his time. He saw the coming convulsion of the public mind, and determined to wait till the tempest, and earthquake, and fire had passed, before attempting to breathe the still, small voice. It is but a waste of present energy to lament the past, and yet it is impossible not to regret that the combined influences of self-distrust and of physical infirmity prevented an earlier fulfilment of Dr. Channing's purpose. Had he estimated aright the importance of his position and the weight of his influence, he would, unquestionably, have taken at once some more decided step than preaching the sermon from which we have quoted, to show his fellow-Christians and fellow-citizens that in the impending struggle he was to be ranked in the van, the forlorn hope, if need were, of freedom. The following beautiful letters, from two of the bravest at once and gentlest of the first-born Abolitionists, will most satisfactorily exhibit his relations at this period to the Antislavery movement. The first is from Mrs. Lydia Maria Child, who, with characteristic magnanimity, risked her all in the cause of the slave.

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* Works, Vol. I., pp. 24, 25.

"I shall always recollect the first time I ever saw Dr. Channing in private. It was immediately after I published my 'Appeal in Favor of that Class of Americans called Africans' (in 1833). A publication taking broad antislavery ground was then a rarity; indeed, that was the first *book* in the United States of such a character; and it naturally produced a sensation disproportioned to its merits. I sent a copy to Dr. Channing, and a few days after he came to see me, at Cottage Place, at least a mile and a half from his residence at Mount Vernon. It was a very bright, sunny day, but he carried his cloak on his arm, and seemed fatigued with the long walk. He staid nearly three hours; during which time we held a most interesting conversation on the general interests of humanity, and on slavery in particular. He told me something of his experience in the West Indies, and said the impression produced by the *sight* of slavery had never left his mind. He expressed great joy that the 'Appeal' had been published, and urged me never to desert the cause, through evil or through good report. In some respects, he thought I went too far. He then entertained the idea, which he afterwards discarded, that slavery existed in a milder form in the United States than elsewhere. I was fresh from the bloody records of our own legislation, and was somewhat vehement in my opposition to this statement; and he sought to moderate me with those calm, wise words which none spoke so well as he.

"We afterwards had many interviews. He often sent for me, when I was in Boston, and always urged me to come and tell him of every new aspect in the Antislavery cause. At every interview, I could see that he grew bolder and stronger on the subject, while I felt that I grew wiser and more just. At first I thought him timid, and even slightly timeserving; but I soon discovered that I formed this estimate from ignorance of his character. I learned that it was justice to *all*, not popularity for *himself*, which made him so cautious. He constantly grew upon my respect, until I came to regard him as the wisest, as well as the gentlest, apostle of humanity. I owe him thanks for preserving me from the one-sidedness into which zealous reformers are so apt to run. He never sought to undervalue the importance of Antislavery, but he said many things to prevent my looking upon it as the *only* question interesting to humanity. My mind needed this check; and I never think of his 'many-sided' conversations without deep gratitude.

"Dr. Channing's interest in the subject constantly increased, and I never met him without being struck with the progress he had made in overcoming some difficulty, which, for the time, troubled his sensitive conscience. I can now distinctly recollect several such steps. At one time he was very doubtful whether it were right to petition Congress. He afterwards headed a petition himself. In all such cases he was held back by the conscientious fear of violating some other duty, in endeavouring to do his duty to the slave. Some zealous reformers did not understand this; and thus construed into a love of popularity what was, in fact, but a fine sense of justice, a more universal love of his species."

The next is from the Rev. Samuel J. May, who, prompt and patient, firm and modest, tolerant though just, set forth in daily life, through all these years of fiery trial, an example of fidelity, wherein uncompromising integrity and benignant gentleness were blended in rare beauty.

"Soon after the enterprise of Mr. Garrison and the Immediate Abolitionists commenced, I found it had attracted the notice of Dr. Channing. Whenever he met me, he would make particular inquiries respecting our doctrine, purposes, measures, and progress; and repeatedly invited me to his house for the express purpose, as he said, of conversing upon the subject. He always spoke as if he were deeply interested, as if he were warmed by a lively sympathy with our movement; although he was afraid of what he thought to be the tendency of some of our opinions and measures.

"In the autumn of 1834, I spent several hours with Dr. Channing, in earnest conversation upon Abolitionism and the Abolitionists. My habitual reverence for him was such, that I had been always apt to defer too readily to his opinions, or not to make a very stout defence of my own, when I could not yield them to his. But by the time to which I refer, I had become so thoroughly convinced of the truth of the leading doctrines of the Abolitionists, and so earnestly engaged in the dissemination of them, that our conversation assumed, more than it had ever done, the character of a debate.

"It seemed to me, that he clearly perceived the essential truth of all the prominent doctrines of the Immediate Abolitionists, and acknowledged the vital importance of the cause we had espoused. His principal, if not his only objections, were alleged against the severity of our denunciations, the harshness of our language, the vehemence, heat, and excitement caused by our meetings. He dwelt upon these objections, which, if they were as well founded as he supposed, lay against what was only incidental, not an essential part of our movement; he dwelt upon them, until I felt impatient, indignant at him; and, forgetting for the moment my wonted reverence, I broke out with great warmth of expression and manner.

"'Dr. Channing,' I said, 'I am tired of these complaints. The cause of suffering humanity, the cause of our oppressed, crushed colored countrymen, has called as loudly upon others as upon us, who are known as the Abolitionists. It was just as incumbent upon others, as upon us, to espouse it. We are not to blame that wiser and better men did not espouse it long ago. The cry of millions in bondage had been heard throughout our land for half a century, and disregarded. The wise and prudent saw the wrong, but thought it not wise and prudent to lift a finger for its correction. The priests and Levites beheld their robbed and wounded countrymen, but passed by on the other side. The children of Abraham held their peace, until at last "the very stones have cried out," in abhorrence of this tremendous wickedness; and you must expect them to cry out like "the stones." You must not expect of many of these, who have been left to take up this great cause, that they will plead it in all that seemliness of phrase which the scholars and practised rhetoricians of our country might use; you must not expect them to manage with all the calmness and discretion that the clergy and statesmen might exhibit. But the scholars, the clergy, the statesmen had done nothing, and did not seem about to do any thing; and for my part, I thank God that at last any persons, be they who they may, have moved earnestly in this cause, for no movement can be in vain. We Abolitionists are just what we are, — babes, sucklings, obscure men, silly women, publicans, sinners; and we shall manage the matter we have taken in hand just as might be expected of such persons as we are. It is unbecoming in abler men, who stood by and would do nothing, to complain of us because we manage this matter no better.

"'Dr. Channing,' I continued with great earnestness, 'it is not our fault, that those who might have managed this great reform more prudently have left it to us to manage as we may be able. It is not our fault, that those who might have plead for the enslaved so much more wisely and eloquently, both with the pen and the living voice, than we can, have been silent. We are not to blame, Sir, that you, who, more, perhaps, than any other man, might have so raised the voice of remonstrance, that it should have been heard throughout the length and breadth of the land, — we are not to blame, Sir, that you have not so spoken. And now, because inferior men have begun to speak and act against what you yourself acknowledge to be an awful injustice, it is not becoming in you to complain of us, because we do it in an inferior style. Why, Sir, have you not moved, why have you not spoken before ? '

" At this point, I bethought me to whom I was administering this earnest rebuke, — the man that stood among the highest of our great and good men, — the man who had ever treated me with the kindness of a father, and whom, from my childhood, I had been accustomed to revere more, perhaps, than any one living. I was almost overwhelmed with a sense of my temerity. His countenance showed that he was much moved. I could not suppose he would receive very graciously all I had said. I awaited, in painful expectation, the reply he would make. It seemed as if long minutes elapsed before the silence was broken ; when, in a very subdued manner, and in his kindest tones of voice, he said, — ' Brother May, I acknowledge the justice of your reproof; I have been silent too long.'

" I never can forget his words, look, manner. I then saw the beauty, the magnanimity, of an humble soul. He was exalted in my esteem more than before.

" Early in December, 1835, he published his book on Slavery. A few days after its appearance, he sent me a kind invitation to dine with him, in company with Mr. S. E. Sewall, that he might know, as he said, what we thought of his work.

" The next spring I removed to the city, and became general agent of the Antislavery Society. I had not been there a month, before Dr. Channing called and invited me to preach for him, — the only invitation to preach in Boston that I received while agent of the Antislavery Society, — a term of fourteen months."

Dr. Channing's relations to Abolitionism at this period are yet further explained in letters from himself to Dr. Follen.

"*Newport*, July 7, 1834. There is no need of what is called *unanimity* in this or any other cause. Men are perpetually sacrificing their intellectual and moral independence to this idol. So great a subject as slavery cannot be viewed by all from one position, nor with entire agreement as to the modes of treating it; and the cause will be aided by the existence of a body who have much sympathy with people at large as to the difficulties of emancipation, but who uncompromisingly maintain that the abolition of slavery ought *immediately* to be decided on, and means used for *immediately commencing* this work. I feel no freedom, as some sects say, to join any of your bodies, but the cause is very dear to my heart."

"*Newport*, July 26, 1834. I have been much shocked by the late riots in New York. That mobs should break out there, however painful, is not surprising; for we know that materials for such explosions exist in all large cities. But in this case there was a toleration of the mob by the *respectable* part of the community, showing a willingness that free discussion should be put down by force, and that slavery should be perpetuated indefinitely. This is a sad omen, a melancholy indication of the decay of the spirit of freedom and humanity. Every kind of 'fanaticism,' it seems, may be endured but that of philanthropy and liberty, and this is even to be put beyond the pale of law. The late trials of the rioters are a farce. Not a newspaper in the country, which I have seen, has expressed indignation at this violation of the sacred right of inquiry and free expression of opinion.

"I do not mean, however, to say that I consider the Abolitionists as blameless. They have outraged the feelings and prejudices of the people unnecessarily. Instead of confining themselves to obtain freedom and means of improvement for the slave, and leaving these to work out their own natural and sure effects, they have done much to intoxicate the colored people, and to exasperate the laboring whites by their mode of treating and speaking of the former class, and have alarmed the community by their mode of setting up the claims of this class to immediate emancipation and to equal consideration and political rights with other citizens. I know they explain the word *immediate* so as to make it innoxious, but it is a fatal mistake for a party to choose a watchword which almost certainly conveys a wrong sense and needs explanation. I make these remarks, not in a spirit of censoriousness, but because the mob and their abettors should have justice done them.

" Still, this New York insurrection against liberty fills me with indignation and grief. The duty of the Abolitionists seems to me clear. Whilst they ought to review their principles with great deliberation, they ought not, at this moment, to *recant* any thing, because recantation will certainly be set down to the account of fear. I wish them to adopt a wiser course and a more benevolent tone towards their opponents; but not to abate their firmness one jot, not to use a wavering word, not to bring suspicion on their character and motives by the least appearance of timidity. I wish them to give up their extravagance, and to pursue practicable objects, and such as consist with the principles of human nature, but to do this resolutely and from conviction, and not with the appearance of unwilling and forced concession to their foes. These persecutions, if met in the spirit of forbearance, calm dignity, and energy, will aid them. Blessed are the persecuted, is a truth for all times."

We have reached the solemn season, when the hosts of light and darkness seemed to hover, in deadly conflict, over every state, city, and village in our land, and the fate of the nation hung on the issue. On the one side, the friends of freedom, rallying around the standard of "Immediate Emancipation," associated themselves into national, state, county, and town Antislavery societies; religious and secular presses gave voice to the swelling enthusiasm of the people of the North; memorials extensively signed were poured in upon Congress; lecturers, without purse or scrip, spread over the country, preaching a new moral crusade; George Thompson, radiant in his humane zeal, swept through our communities, slaying, as he went, the serpent brood of worldly sophistries with the golden bow and keen shafts of his eloquence; and, above all, the news of emancipation in the British West Indies filled the hearts of all true lovers of their race with emulous hope. But, on the other side, mobs, silently tolerated, or openly cheered on by leading editors, politicians, and influential men, attacked and plundered the houses of leading Abolitionists; lecturers were insulted, pelted, outraged, outcast; pamphlets and papers, on pretence of their containing "incendiary matter," were, in utter violation of law, excluded from the mails, and publicly burned; prices were set upon the heads of the most famous advocates of freedom; governors and legislatures of Southern States demanded the arrest and surrender of individuals made obnoxious by their zeal for the slaves; the Executive of the United States invited the attention of Congress to the painful excitement, and recommended the prohibition, under severe penalties, of the circulation of Antislavery papers through the South; and even governors and high officers of Northern States dared to advise the passage of enactments designed to put an end to the Antislavery agitation. It was in the beginning of this strife that Dr. Channing spoke thus to his people, on his return from Newport.

October, 1834. "The civilized world will heap just reproaches on a *free* nation, in which mobs pour forth their fury on the opposers of *slavery*. These mobs are, indeed, most dishonorable to us as a people, because they have been too much the expression of public sentiment. Against this sentiment I feel bound to bear earnest and indignant testimony. The language which filled the country at the time of these disturbances was such as should never have passed the lips of freemen. Nothing was more common than to hear it said, 'These mobs are bad, but they will put down *Antislavery*.' Why was it that these mobs ruled our largest city for several successive nights? Because there was a willingness that the Antislavery movement should be put down by force. The mobs, considered in themselves, were of secondary importance. In the present low condition of society, every great city has materials for them. But the spirit of the community, which gave them scope, and which wished them success, deserves the severest reprobation of the philanthropist and the Christian. The truth is, that, as a people, we are indifferent to the greatest of wrongs and calamities, that is, slavery, and therefore, whilst we can tolerate all other excesses, we cannot away with the excesses of the friends of emancipation. There is no sympathy with those who are wounded and stung with the injuries of the slave, and therefore we are willing that the dearest right of freemen, that of free discussion, should be wrested from them. It is this state of feeling in the community which is far more melancholy than a vulgar mob. It is impossible to read the newspapers of the country without seeing the profound unconcern which pervades the country on the subject of slavery. In truth, New England has been disgraced by publications going to reconcile us to the evil. It is said, again and again, that we have no right to meddle with slavery at the South. What! Is it meddling, to discuss a great question, one which involves the happiness of millions, and to spread abroad neglected truth? . . . . .

"I know that the mobs to which I have referred were stirred up and defended by the cry of fanaticism raised against the advocates of abolition. That this clamor was altogether unfounded, I do not say. I do not stand here as the advocate of Antislavery associations. That they have carried good principles to extremes, have winked out of sight the difficulties of their object, have hoped to accomplish the work of years in a moment, have exposed their cause to suspicion by bitterness of language, by precipitancy, by needlessly outraging public feelings or prejudices, I certainly shall not deny. But fanaticism — if such be the proper term for an excess of feeling above judgment — is seldom separated from a good cause. The most generous sentiments take this form; and if fanaticism is to be put down by force, I fear nothing great, nothing worthy of a thrilling love, will be left us. Religion especially must be proscribed. Mobs must be let loose against all the more fervent manifestations of this highest principle of the soul.

"When a good cause suffers from the excesses of its friends, the true course is, not to abandon it in despair, nor to surrender it to the frenzy of the populace, but to espouse and prosecute it with calm wisdom, enlightened zeal, and unfettered, fearless resolution. The great interests of humanity do not lose their claims on us because sometimes injudiciously maintained. We ought to blame extravagance, but we ought also to remember that very often it is the indifference of the many to a good and great work, which hurries the few who cleave to it into excess. Let slavery be truly understood among us, and let just moral feelings in regard to it be generally cherished and expressed, and fanaticism would pass away, and a moral power against slavery would steadily grow and spread, before which this greatest calamity, scourge, curse, and reproach of our country would yield."

A copy of this sermon was requested for publication by some of Dr. Channing's hearers; and in reply to the committee who applied for it, he wrote as follows. This letter serves to set in a very clear light the conscientiousness and thoroughness which so many misunderstood for fear.

"*October* 20, 1834. Gentlemen,—Your approbation of the discourse delivered by me on Sunday last has been truly gratifying. On receiving your application, I had to propose to myself only one question, and that was, whether the publication of the discourse would be useful, and I regret to say that I am obliged to differ from you in opinion on this point.

"You recollect that my single object was to offer some remarks on the feelings and state of mind brought to light by the recent outrages among ourselves, and consequently none of the topics were discussed to any extent. This was particularly true in relation to slavery. I exposed some false and pernicious notions often expressed here on the subject; but the strength of the argument against slavery was not given. In truth, this great evil was hardly touched. Now, if my discourse were to be confined to this part of the country it might be useful; but it would be spread far and wide, and would excite attention at the South, and I cannot but fear that so narrow and imperfect a view of the subject, which takes no notice of many great and difficult points, would be any thing but satisfactory, and might even prejudice the cause of truth and humanity. The necessity under which I was laid, by my general plan of discoursing on other subjects besides slavery, not only confined my observations on this topic far more than I wished, but gave the sermon a local character, which is an additional reason for withholding it from the press. Were I to publish, I should feel myself bound, not only to vindicate more fully the invaded rights of Antislavery societies, but to enlarge on what I deem their errors. I have always protested against their motto, 'Immediate Emancipation,' as indefinite and equivocal, as needing much explanation, and as exposing their cause to the imputation of alarming rashness. I have always believed that the people of the South, if they would conscientiously and in good faith resolve to remove the evil, could best devise the means, safe alike to master and to slave, and I would not urge the precipitate adoption of any other.

" On one account, I am sorry to decline compliance with your request. It is possible — though I cannot think it very probable — that I may be considered by those who do not know me as shrinking from the reproaches which would be brought on me by the circulation of my opinions on slavery, and I should be wrong to seem to countenance by my example a selfish prudence. Unless I deceive myself, the reproach attached to what I deem important truths would be with me a motive for giving them the aid of my feeble testimony. I consider the very strength of pernicious prejudices as a reason for assailing them. In proportion to the vehemence with which principles involving human happiness and improvement are opposed should be our zeal in their defence. We are bound, as Christians, to lay down even life for the truth, and that man is little worthy of this honorable name who shrinks from the lighter injuries which fall upon unpopular opinions at the present day. I was induced to preach on this subject, in part by the desire of freeing myself from the painful consciousness of unfaithfulness to the interests of liberty and humanity, and by the hope of giving new confidence to those who hold the same views with myself; and these motives would lead me to publish the discourse, could I avoid the conviction of its unfitness for general circulation. It is my hope that I may have strength and time to do something, however little, for the promotion of just moral feeling in relation to slavery, for I am persuaded that the want of this is the real and only difficulty in the way of its abolition. I see but one sure remedy for slavery, and that is a deep sense of moral and religious obligation in regard to it; and to spread this at home and abroad, in the North and the South, and through the civilized world, seems to me one of the most important objects of Christian philanthropy.

"I am the last person to give unnecessary pain and offence to my fellow-citizens at the South. From no part of the country have I received more cordial expressions of sympathy and approbation than from that quarter. But I should hold myself utterly unworthy of their good opinion, if such considerations should deter me from the publication of what I deem important truths. I would not, however, in speaking freely, forget the spirit of our religion, or the gratitude which I owe to the South, and I shall never cease to lament and condemn the use of exasperating language in this solemn controversy.

"This city has not as yet incurred the guilt and disgrace of outrages intended to put down by force the public discussion of slavery. May we be spared this infamy! And to avert the evil nothing is needed, but that our well-disposed citizens, who form an immense majority, should express their abhorrence and indignation at every attempt, wherever and however made, to wrest by violence from any portion of the community the rights of freemen."

The following letters will show us yet further the working of Dr. Channing's mind during this time of trial, and the motives which finally compelled him to address a larger public than his parish, and thus to fulfil his long delayed plan.

" *August* 19, 1835. My dear Sir, — I have this moment seen in the Daily Advertiser that a meeting is to be held on Friday afternoon, in Boston, on the subject of slavery. I cannot but look forward to this meeting with great solicitude. I have seen with sorrow the influence of the unwise proceedings of Antislavery societies, in impairing among us the true moral feeling in regard to this tremendous evil; and I cannot but fear that our citizens, in their zeal to oppose an extravagant party, may prove unfaithful to those great principles of freedom and equal rights on which our glory as a community rests. If the meeting will satisfy itself with pronouncing severe reprobation on any attempt to stir up the slaves to revolt, with deprecating the circulation of inflammatory pamphlets among them, and with disclaiming all desire in the North to interfere by any political action with slavery in the Slave States, no harm will be done. I am not aware, however, that the Antislavery societies have advanced any principles, or adopted any measures, which call for such rebuke and such disclaimer. If they have, I shall not find fault with a public expression of reprehension, though the wisdom of such a censure may be doubted.

" But in attempting to put down a party, let not great principles be touched or compromised. Let it not be forgotten, that liberty is above all price, and that to rob a fellow-creature of it is to inflict the greatest wrong. Any resolve passed at the proposed meeting, implying, however indirectly, that a human being can rightfully be held and treated as property, — any resolve intended to discourage the free expression of opinion on slavery, or to sanction the lawless violence which has been directed against the Antislavery societies, — any resolve implying that the Christian and philanthropist may not strive to abolish slavery by moral influences, by appeals to the reason, conscience, and heart of the slaveholder, — any resolve expressing stronger sympathy with the slaveholder than with the slave, or tending at all to encourage the continuance of slavery, — will afflict me beyond measure. I have gloried in belonging to a city which has been eminently the cradle of civil and religious liberty, and where the respect due to every human being is understood, perhaps, better than in any other community. That Boston should in any way lend itself to the cause of oppression would be a dark omen indeed."

"*Newport*, August 25, 1835. The country is at this moment greatly agitated. The Abolitionists have of late crowded the Southern mails with their pamphlets, and in this way spread alarm and rage in the Slaveholding States. There was, of course, no desire to stir up insurrection; but the slaveholders chose to see in this unwise movement a plot for their ruin. At Charleston they broke into the post-office, seized on the pamphlets, and burned them; and such is the state of feeling at the South, that no one could spread Abolition tracts or sentiments but at the peril of his life. A professed Abolitionist could not even travel there with safety. To calm this agitation, the people at the North are getting up meetings and condemning the proceedings of the Anti-slavery societies. Meanwhile the Abolitionists are mobbed and insulted with impunity all over the country, their meetings dispersed, &c. You know I have always disapproved their bitterness and irritating language; but nothing can justify the wicked, brutal violence directed against them, nor will they ultimately suffer from persecution. They have a deep consciousness of the truth and excellence of their cause. They have, too, the immense advantage of acting from great principles; and these alone give permanent strength. Such men cannot be put down. I have many doubts whether societies should be used to carry on the work of Abolition. Whilst we ought to bear our testimony against slavery, yet we ought to do it in a way which will not at all endanger the peace of the South; and there is a noise in the movements of great societies which the slave may be expected to hear. At least, societies ought to proceed with more wisdom than those which exist among us."

"*August*, 1835. The South is becoming more and more excited on the subject of slavery, and is preparing to resist the efforts of Antislavery societies. Our prospect in this particular is not bright. The true feeling in respect to slavery is not gaining ground. You see that our country is in a state which requires that our children should be trained to suffer and sacrifice much for freedom and humanity."

"*Newport*, September 6, 1835. My health has been, perhaps, uncommonly good, and my summer almost too happy. I could not reconcile myself to this kind of happiness, if I were fit for any thing else. I feel the claims of society on all who can render active service. The country has been in a feverish state, and is so still. I suppose —— has written you about the flame which the Abolitionists have kindled. Their injudicious operations have given the South advantage over them. They sent loads of pamphlets to the South, without a thought of stirring up the slaves; but the masters, seized with rage or panic, perhaps both, have succeeded in making the North believe that every pamphlet was a firebrand, and have appealed to the sympathies and interests of the good people here so successfully, that, for the time, the spirit of humanity and freedom seems next to lost. I am not discouraged, however. The North is not really worse than it was, but is only showing its true character. We have been hoping that the love of freedom might stand alone in the character, or exist in those who, in all other respects, want moral elevation. We may find that it is the last crowning virtue. It requires a respect for human nature and a trust in its high destiny, which you must have found wanting in many 'good people.' I do not love to scold at the Abolitionists, for, with all their defects, they alone adhere to great principles, and, still more, they are for the moment, or appear to be, a fallen party; but they have certainly hurt a good cause. I doubt whether the cause can be carried on by associations here. This tumult, and violences of other kinds, have quite filled our worldly men with despair."

" *September* 20, 1835. I have no news, though the country is in a very interesting state. The slavery question is now agitating the South and North. The South is in a flame, — threatening disunion, talking of non-intercourse with States or towns which will not put down Abolition, insisting that laws shall be passed against Antislavery societies and publications, — and I am sorry to say that the North wants the true spirit with which such violence should be met. In South Carolina the post-office has been violently entered, and Abolition pamphlets seized and destroyed. A man on whom the charge of Abolitionism at the South is fixed is in danger of his life. Justice cannot wait for courts, but hangs him up on the spot. The Abolitionists, by their rashness, have brought on us these evils, or rather have been the occasions of this explosion. The evils existed before, and I cannot but believe that good is to come from having the spirit of slavery, both at the North and South, brought fully to light."

" *Newport*, October 27, 1835. I have spent the summer in such seclusion, that I have little news. Abolition is still the exciting topic. The mobs still interfere with the Anti-slavery meetings, and the South alarms many at the North by threatening us with separation. Happily, the great prosperity of the country and the pressure of business do not allow people to think much on the subject."

"*October* 29, 1835. You will wonder at finding me here so late; but I was tempted to stay by the pleasantness of the season, and by the desire of more quiet and leisure than I could enjoy in Boston. I am now engaged heartily in writing on the subject of slavery, the very thing you so often urged. I have rather shrunk from the task, for I am easily exhausted by labor; but I feel the importance of bringing the people to serious and deliberate reflection on this subject. The excitement against Antislavery societies has disturbed people's judgment in regard to slavery itself, and emboldened the South to use language very offensive and painful to the friends of freedom. I trust I shall write temperately, as well as freely and fervently. Say nothing of my purpose till you hear of the publication. It is possible I may be dissatisfied with my work."

"*Boston*, November 9, 1835. I have exhausted myself in writing my little book on Slavery. It is now in the press, and may be out in a fortnight. I was determined to write it by the declension of the spirit of freedom among us. The subject has been very painful to me, and I long to escape from it to more cheering views. However, we must learn to look evils in the face, and to bear the burdens of the suffering."

"*November* 10. I wrote you that my little book on Slavery was in the press. It will not be more than one hundred and fifty pages. I cannot write much without exhaustion."

"*November* 10, 1835. By the way, I have a small work in the press about Slavery. I hope it will be out in a fortnight. It has cost me a good deal of labor, for my object was to settle principles, and to expound them so as to give no ground for cavil. I shall bring a storm on me, but for this I am prepared. Indeed, I begin to feel as if it were a bad sign to be in favor. The want of settled principles in the world strikes me more and more, and a man who should speak and act the whole truth might be driven to a hermitage. A good deal has been gained for the world. Christianity has done much; but whoever should carry it out fully, in teaching and life, might find himself alone. This, however, we ought to do, to the extent of our distinct knowledge of the truth. One difficulty is, that we do not correspond in action to our knowledge, so that our testimony to the truth would do little good. I feel this more and more. We have got the habit of admitting principles which we do not act on. Hence, inward falsehood. And this gives uncertainty and weakness to life. I hope we shall do better. If we were in the habit of carrying out every principle we acknowledge, we should think more deliberately, solemnly, admit the doubtful more slowly, and at the same time have a keener, more discriminating perception of the true. What new life and power and joy we should find in thus committing ourselves entirely to our principles! But I am beginning to preach."

This book on Slavery appeared at a most opportune season, — just as the community of Boston was beginning to be thoroughly sick with mortification, if not truly penitent for the irreparable disgrace inflicted on its fame by the mob of "highly respectable gentlemen," who, on the afternoon of October 21, broke up the meeting of the Female Antislavery Society, seized on Mr. Garrison, and vainly hunted for Mr. Thompson, even in a private dwelling, with the hope "that he might be brought to the tar-kettle before dark."[*] Dr. Channing's estimate of this work, and his gratification at the reception it met with, are thus manifested.

"*Boston*, December 16, 1835.[†] I agree entirely with your criticism on the defect of logical arrangement in my book. I committed the offence with malice prepense, and was hoping that it would pass undetected, for you were the first to point it out. I inverted the proper order of the first two chapters, that I might fasten the reader immediately to the work by presenting the topic in which the greatest interest could be felt. I knew that the great positions on which the argument was to rest were undeniably, universally admitted, so that there was nothing to fear from postponing the discussion of the second chapter.

"My greatest logical offence lay in postponing to the last head of the first chapter the topic which was fundamental and involved in all the preceding. But this seemed to me necessary. You know the skepticism of the multitude as to human nature, its faculties, divine principles, and destiny, and you know, perhaps, that on these subjects I am thought to be a little *exalté*. Had I put these topics in front, I should have created a state of mind, in not a few readers, unfavorable to the truth. As it was, I had great difficulty with that last head. I cut it down not a little, softened expressions, tried to make it tame, that I might get the sympathies of the people. So far, I sacrificed logical order from choice. I confess, that, in other respects, I saw errors of this nature in the first chapter which might have been corrected; but my physical exhaustion in writing the work was great. I was stopped more than once by weakness, and had not courage to attempt to satisfy myself. The first chapter cost me comparatively little effort. The second was the only one upon which I spent the labor which the work deserved, and that, I think, is unexceptionable as respects logical arrangement.

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[*] Boston Commercial Gazette, October 22, 1835.

[†] To Dr. Charles Follen.

"That you find so much to censure in the book gives me no pain. I have to thank my friends for letting me off so easily. That you found so much to approve gives me sincere pleasure. I certainly did the best which I could under the circumstances; but whilst I am most grateful to God for the unexpected reception it has met with and the good it has done, I am as little satisfied with the execution of my task as any one can be."

"*Boston*, January 4, 1836. I hope you have received my packet containing my little work on Slavery. It has found a better reception here than I feared. How it is regarded at the South, I do not know. I expected much reproach when I published it, both at the North and South. I cannot but believe I have done good. Many, I know, have given serious attention to the subject in consequence of this publication, and acknowledge its importance as never before. I should be glad to feel as if I had done my duty in this field, and might turn to another. I am not as well fitted, perhaps, as I should be, to contemplate evils. I sigh for brighter prospects. I have been cheering myself with writing some sermons on the greatness which breaks out in human nature amidst all its sins and degradation. I could hardly live, if I could not see something good and great around me. This is as necessary to me as the sun's light, — more necessary, more cheering."

"*January* 10, 1836.* Dear Sir, — I received your letter this morning, and I cannot let the day pass without assuring you of the great pleasure it gave me. I wrote the book with a hope of doing good, with a deep feeling of the need of such an appeal, and, I trust, from a strong conviction of duty. I waited long, and postponed the effort, till I could wait no longer. I felt that some one ought to bear witness to the truth, but could hear of no one who felt himself called to the work. The reception of the book has been far more favorable than I expected. I knew that it would meet fierce opposition at a distance. I feared it would find not a few opposers at home. I thank God that so many have been disposed to hear me patiently. Many, who were grieved when they heard of my purpose to write on this subject, have expressed their satisfaction in the work. In this neighbourhood, my end seems to have been answered, to a good degree. That is, I have helped to fix great principles in minds which had become unsettled by the late excitement, and to awaken benevolence to the means of removing one of the greatest of evils.

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* To Noah Worcester, D. D.

"Your approbation is very precious. I know your sincere love of your fellow-creatures. I believe, that, had my work breathed a different spirit, you would instinctively have been pained by it. My earnest desire and purpose was, to observe towards *all* those precepts of justice and benevolence which I was inculcating; and you give me the hope that I have not wholly failed. To be the occasion of joy to one whom I revere so much is no small recompense for my labor."

On the 26th of May, 1836, Dr. Channing attended for the first time a meeting of the New England Antislavery Convention. His impressions, as communicated in a letter to a friend, give a very good view of his hopes and fears in relation to the Abolitionists. He had been speaking of the meetings of the Unitarians during Anniversary week, and thus continues: —

"*May* 27, 1836. Not a sectarian whisper was heard, not a feeling of unkindness was breathed towards other denominations, but, on the contrary, a desire to coöperate with all good men in the common cause of regenerating the world. That we have made great progress I do not say. Has it been made by any body of Christians? I fear that we all interpret the religion too much by tradition, and measure the laws of our Master by the usages of the world. I fear we little comprehend the hostility which exists between the spirit of our religion and our present social state. We understand little how all business, and intercourse, and education, how all the relations of man to man, are tainted by an antichristian spirit. The deep need of a reform which will throw all former reformations into the shade, and which will give society a new aspect, is little comprehended by any denomination. Still, it may be said of our own denomination, that it manifests a higher life, and that there is increased reason for hope that it will fulfil its great mission on earth. If not, — if it is to sink into a lifeless sect, — the sooner it ceases to cumber the ground, the better.

"During the present week, we have had, not only religious meetings, but conventions of other societies. In one you will probably feel some interest. The New England Antislavery Society has celebrated its anniversary. Yesterday I was present at one of its meetings, and you may be gratified by some observations on its proceedings. Opposed as I am to slavery, I have never sympathized with the intolerant spirit of this class of its opposers, and from the most orthodox of the party I find perhaps little more favor than from the slaveholder, so that I may pass for an impartial witness. I was struck with what always surprises me on similar occasions, — with the extent to which the power of speaking in public is possessed in our country. I was surrounded by plain people, belonging to what is called the middle class, and yet it seemed as if no one was silent for want of the talent of giving utterance to his thoughts. I received the impression which I delight to receive of the intellectual energy of the mass of the people. I heard no eloquence; though I probably heard speeches which the newspapers would praise for their oratory. In truth, eloquence seems to be the staple of our country, if the papers may be credited. In ancient times it was deemed a rare growth. Now no weed so common. Not only does it abound in Congress, and caucuses, and pulpits, and the innumerable societies with which the country teems, but hardly a meeting at a tavern or on a railroad is held without eloquence.

"But to return to the Antislavery meeting. My principal object in attending it was to judge for myself of the spirit of this society. I wished to ascertain whether there was no diminution of the bitterness and intolerance of feeling which had characterized too many of its proceedings; and, on the whole, my impression was, that the party is improving by time, is gaining wisdom by experience. There was, indeed, a tendency to unsparing invective. In this respect, however, I heard nothing so exceptionable as the vituperations, and coarse, unfeeling personalities which too often dishonor Congress; and can it be wondered at, when the highest deliberative bodies in the country are wanting in the spirit of Christians and the courtesy of gentlemen, that a taint of coarseness should spread through the community?

"I may be told, that Abolitionists are not politicians, but men who accept Christianity as their only rule, and who construe its pacific precepts with uncommon rigor. I reply, that their inconsistency is the more flagrant on account of their profession, but still, that they are to be judged by the character of their times, and that hitherto the Christian world has made very little progress in the divine art of assailing and overcoming evil. A good cause is continually made a cover for bad passions. Self-will, the desire of victory, the principle of self-exaltation, and the common propensity to carry our point by force, all find means of indulgence under the cloak of zeal for truth, for God, for humanity. Even the well-disposed think it easier to drive than to persuade, and rely more on authority or vehemence than on reason. One would think, from the common style of controversy, that it was an established principle, that the surest way to bring over men to our opinion is to awaken their self-will, pride, and prejudices; that to offend is the royal road to conciliation; that to rouse the spirit of angry, obstinate self-defence is the means of conquering opposition. The tactics of theological and philanthropic champions still in use show us that we have yet to learn the sublimest of all arts, that of influencing generously and nobly moral and rational beings. The controvertist, who does not harden his opponent and make him a worse man, is rarely found in the lists of religious or political warfare. I try the Abolitionists by the common standard, — and, much as their intolerance offends me, I know not that it greatly exceeds what is common in most other parties or sects, — and do not find them wanting.

"The most gratifying circumstance at the meeting was a short address from a colored man. His complexion led me to think he was of pure African blood, and his diction, his countenance, his gestures, his thoughts, his whole bearing, must have convinced every hearer that the African is a man is the highest sense of that word. I felt that he was a partaker with me of that humanity for which I unceasingly thank my Creator. I felt on this occasion, as I perhaps never felt before, what an amount of intellectual and moral energy is crushed, is lost to the human race, by slavery. Among the two or three millions doomed by this system to brutal ignorance, and denied the means of developing their powers, how many men and women are there, who, under the culture and self-respect which belong to American freedom, would become blessings and ornaments to society by their intelligence and virtue!

"I was much struck, at this meeting, with the life which seemed to possess its members. Nothing was said or done mechanically. There was no forced zeal, no effort of the leaders to whip up the lagging spirit of the mass. It is easy, on entering a meeting, to tell at once whether it is a living or dead one, — whether people have come together from habit, from a cold sense of propriety or duty, or from a deep, irresistible impulse. You know by instinct whether you are surrounded by life or death. This body was alive. I am sure, that, if the stirrers up of mobs could have looked into the souls of these Abolitionists, they would have seen the infinite folly of attempting to put them down by such persecutions as they can bring to bear on them. Nothing but the Inquisition, the stake, the scaffold, nothing but extermination, can do the work. All other measures do but minister new life to the spirit which they are employed to subdue. Abolitionism has nothing to fear but from indifference. The only policy which can avail against it is to let it alone. The vehemence of the South has given it an importance and energy which the struggles of years could not have won for it. Its own intolerance might have kept it weak, had it not thus excited a severer and more cruel intolerance against itself; and so far it seems to have profited by its own wrong-doing.

"Another fact which struck me at this meeting was the absence of what is called the influential part of the community. Men of standing, as they are called, were not there. Abolitionism seems to make no progress in this class, nor will it, unless it should gain a party large enough in the middle and laboring ranks to be worth the notice of politicians, and then it will be amply repaid by courtesy and attention for the neglect it now receives. The harvest of Abolitionism is to be reaped among what are called the middle classes, and an engine of immense power has been put into their hands for this purpose by Governor M'Duffie, and other Southern politicians, who have taught that we, the rich and educated of the Free States, can keep our property and our political institutions only by making the great laboring portion of the community our slaves. This new Southern doctrine is as yet but imperfectly understood by the mass of our farmers, mechanics, and other working men. But the Abolitionists are wielding this weapon with zeal and effect, and are linking themselves more and more with the mass of the people.

"As to the future history of Abolitionism, I feel much uncertainty. Whether, if left to itself, if unaided by opposition, it will live and advance, I know not. The present moment is unpropitious to it. The people at large are swallowed up in gain, are intoxicated with promises of boundless wealth, are worshipping what they call prosperity. It concerns them little who is slave and who is free, or how the battles of liberty and truth are fought at home and abroad, provided they can drive some enormously profitable bargain, or bring some vast speculation to a successful issue. Men are too busy to think of Abolitionism, and will be apt to forget it, unless forced on their notice by violence. There is, indeed, one ground for believing that Abolitionism may endure, even if unopposed. With all its faults, it is founded essentially on religious conviction. It is thus bound up with the strongest principle of human nature. It will not, therefore, be easily discouraged by neglect. It will leave nothing untried to move the worldly multitude, and unexpected events may prepare a multitude for its influence.

"You speak of my book on Slavery. It is true, that this little work was far from finding universal favor here. It met, however, a better reception than I expected. The people of this city repel indignantly the charge of being friends of slavery, but, on the whole, they are altogether indifferent to it. A great part of them care no more for the slave at the South than for the Pariah caste of Hindostan. This indifference very easily takes the form of opposition to any efforts which may offend the South. In truth, we have many elements of a proslavery spirit, which only wait for occasion to be unfolded. In the first place, the class here, as in all the Free States, which holds the same social rank with the Southern masters, very naturally sympathizes with them, and shrinks from a class so fallen and abject as the slaves. Then we have a considerable body of conservatives, who live in alarm at the instability of the times, and who see no security but in keeping things, good or bad, just as they are. To these must be added a part, I know not how large, of the men of business, of the commercial and manufacturing class, who hold profitable relations with the South, and frown on any man, be he who he may, whose inconsiderate philanthropy would rob them of a customer or diminish their gains. The politicians, of course, inquire how the agitation of the subject will affect their party and promotion. And then there is a class of truly good people, whose imaginations are so haunted by spectres of insurrection and massacre at the South, that they see even in a moral and religious book on slavery the germ or sign of a servile war.

"That, notwithstanding all these influences, my little work found so much favor, has been to me matter of much thankfulness and joy. I am told that a majority of the people here desire a free discussion of slavery; but so great is the influence of the classes who enjoin silence on the subject, that a man who looks only to his own interest is strongly tempted to be still. The intolerance of our city, of which I have spoken, compels the prudent editor to shut his paper against the friends of freedom. This spirit has recently been manifested in a manner which will do us no honor abroad. A distinguished lady from England, having every moral as well as intellectual claim on kind attention, was excluded from our hospitality in no small degree, because in an Antislavery meeting she had expressed the feelings which every man and woman in her country is known to partake, and in which she only gave utterance to the sentiment of the civilized world. Her sex and character did not secure her from insult in our newspapers. So overbearing is opinion in this good city of Boston.

"There is one observation which I have made, during the discussion of slavery, which will help to explain the state of feeling in Boston on the subject. I have always found that men who put faith in the progress of society are exceedingly hostile to slavery, whilst those who are skeptical as to any considerable improvement of the human race desire to keep things as they are. Now I know no place in which this skepticism prevails more widely than in Boston."

A few letters written during the summer and autumn of 1836 will illustrate Dr. Channing's relations at this time to the great struggle between freedom and slavery. The first is to Miss Harriet Martineau, whose fidelity to the cause of justice had subjected her in Boston to the unworthy treatment which called forth the indignant comments in the preceding extract.

"*Newport*, July 28, 1836. I refer to the Abolitionists, a persecuted, calumniated, injured party, on this account, as well as others, entitled to sympathy, but at the same time tempted to interpret severely their persecutors, who happen to be the great majority. . . . . .

"I am more and more willing to accept the enthusiasm of men in a glorious cause, with all its errors. The time has not come yet for joining the calmest reason with the profoundest feeling. I honor the sufferers for truth and freedom, whose extravagance, perhaps, I escape for want of their generosity."

" *July* 29, 1836.* I wrote you in my last letter of Mexico. Since that period the successes of the Texans have encouraged a stronger expression at the South of the desire to get possession of Mexico. I have, however, less and less apprehension of the event; for the Mexicans at length are awake to their danger, and a bitter hatred towards this country has taken possession of the whole people. This feeling is, perhaps, destined to be the great national bond. Thus our short-sighted policy has erected a barrier of hate between the two countries; and in this we have not only done injury to ourselves, but to the Mexicans and the cause of humanity. A just and humane policy would have given us the only possession of that country which we should desire. It would have subjected Mexico to our moral power. A tide of emigration would have set towards it, and thus our institutions, science, spirit, improvements, would have spread themselves over those vast and fine countries. Now we have thrown Mexico into other hands, forced her to look across the ocean for support, and shut her up against our own influences. I expressed to you a hope that other powers would prevent her dismemberment by a pacific interference. The danger seems to me less great, though Texas, which has comparatively no Mexican population, may fall into our hands.

" The connection of this subject with slavery gives you an interest in it. The emancipation of the West Indies has strengthened the desire of the slaveholders here to secure themselves by spreading the horrible system on this continent; but England by that act has broken the chain everywhere. That is the great act of our times. Very sincerely, your friend."

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* To Wm. Rathbone, Esq.

"*Boston*, October 5, 1836.* When I last wrote to you, I expressed a hope that all the nations of Europe, having American colonies, would remonstrate against our extending ourselves along the Gulf of Mexico. I hoped that a joint and early action on the subject might have some influence on our people and government; but the time has gone by. Texas seems to have fallen into our hands, and I see not but that the rest of Mexico is to follow. In consequence of Santa Aña's capture, federalism will probably triumph in Mexico, which is but another name for disunion; so that the provinces will be ready to be devoured as fast as we shall want them. How painful the thought, that those fine regions are to be overrun with slavery!"

"*Newport*, October 5, 1836.† I see that petitions for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia are in circulation. It seems to me important that the leading men in the Antislavery Society should give this subject their most serious thoughts. *One* memorial or petition should be spread through the country, and it should be prepared most carefully. No sentiment or expression should be admitted which will give offence to good people in the Free States, or cause of complaint to the South. The memorial should be so framed as to unite all who desire the abolition of slavery, whether in the society or out of it. We want an overwhelming number of petitioners. Memorials written rashly and passionately will give the representatives from the Free States an excuse for letting the whole subject alone. If the arguments in support of the right and duty of Congress to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia can be given in a very condensed form, so as not to make a long instrument, good would be done. Will you suggest all this to your friends? I deem it of great moment.

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* To Thomas Thornely, Esq.

† To Dr. Charles Follen.

"Another memorial reciting the cruel laws on the subject of slavery in the District, and prayers for their modification or repeal, so that slavery, as long as it exists, may be as mild as possible, might do much good. I see not how the representatives from the Free States could help supporting it."

In the autumn of 1836, Dr. Channing found himself compelled once more to address the American public, with the hope of casting out the demon of persecution which possessed it. During the preceding session, Congress had outraged the right of petition, by refusing to receive memorials relating in any way to slavery, thus setting a fatal example to the whole country; and in July, a mob, instigated and even led on by some of the chief citizens of Cincinnati, had destroyed the press of "The Philanthropist," and driven its editor, James G. Birney, Esq., from the city. It was plain to him that a struggle for the very life of liberty of speech was begun; and his heart reëchoed the thrilling words of Whittier, —

"Now, when the padlocks for our lips are forging,
Silence is crime."

He had written to a friend, the year before, in relation to his book on Slavery, — "I never acted under a stronger conviction of duty than in publishing this book. My spirit preyed on itself, till I had spoken the truth." And now he could not feel at peace, till he had offered to Mr. Birney a public testimonial of respect for his integrity and sympathy for his sacrifices, and uttered an indignant remonstrance against the tame subservience with which a majority of Northern freemen were attempting to put a gag upon discussion. At the same time, he was most earnest to be *just* at once to the Abolitionists and to the slaveholders. In a letter to Dr. Follen, he thus manifests the impartial rectitude by which he was governed.

"*January*, 1837. The most interesting point to me on the Abolition question at this moment is, the real state of feeling at the South, the real motive for perpetuating slavery. If this be love of gain, I am prepared to speak as I have not. I wish one treatise might be devoted by some able man to this single subject. Nothing has such an influence in preventing a right action and feeling on slavery at the North as the belief that the evil is an inherited one, which the present generation are obliged to continue for their own safety, and which they would gladly escape. Let the truth be known. I have felt myself called to express a good hope of many slaveholders, not only to be just to them, but to counteract what has seemed to me the bad influence of the uncharitableness of the Abolitionists on the people here, who have sided with the slaveholder as an injured man. I have wished that it might be seen, that utter abhorrence of slavery is reconcilable with justice to the master. If, however, we have been more than just, if we have been excessively, unreasonably lenient to the slaveholders, let the truth be told. If the basest of all motives is perpetuating the greatest of wrongs, then it is time to set the proofs of this enormity before the people."

It was during the winter of 1837, that the great battle in favor of the Right of Petition was fought and won in Congress by the venerable John Quincy Adams, amidst brutal insults, threats of violence, volleys of abuse, and the wiles and ambuscades of pettifogging politicians. Dr. Channing's views in regard to the *expediency* of using this right were thus expressed in a letter to Ellis Gray Loring, Esq.

"*March* 11, 1837. I wanted strength to talk freely last evening, and I felt, after you had left me, that I had given you a very imperfect statement of my views in relation to the subject of our conversation. Being confined to the house to-day, I will try to supply the deficiency by throwing a few thoughts upon paper.

"I have always doubted the expediency of agitating the subject of Abolitionism in Congress. I have petitioned once or twice for the abolition of slavery in the District; but my great motive for so doing was personal. I wished by some public act to disclaim all participation in the national guilt incurred by the continuance of slavery on that spot. I had no expectation of success; and having freed my conscience, I ceased from this mode of action. I have feared that the Antislavery cause would be thrown back by calling on Congress to forward it. This cause has two aspects:—first, the political; next, the moral, religious, philanthropic. It must be presented, as I think, under the last. The great obstruction to its progress is, that the people habitually view it under the first. Its political connections and bearings have got possession of men's minds, and shut out the higher views which alone can free the slave. On this point no proofs are needed. Did you not observe, that, in the protest against the recent action of the ministers of Worcester county on this subject, the nonconcurring brethren planted themselves on this ground alone, that the Antislavery movement was a political one? Now this diseased state of mind seems to me to be strengthened by nothing so much as by bringing the subject before Congress. There the political aspect of the subject takes precedence, and, in truth, hides every other. There the whole South, in one phalanx and with unmeasured violence, takes the ground of self-defence, and sets up the cry of invaded rights, of unconstitutional encroachments, of assaults on State sovereignty, &c. The question becomes a sectional and constitutional one, not a moral and religious one.

"The South would necessarily be alarmed by Abolition societies, even supposing them to abstain from all political action. It would say, that large masses, strongly excited and lashing themselves into feverish heat by proselyting struggles, are not to be trusted; that, once a majority, they will seize on the powers of the government to suppress slavery; that human nature, thoroughly committed to a cause, never abstains from force, when power is gained; and that the very tumults which the movements of such masses create threaten the quiet of the Slave States. Now these apprehensions of the South are turned into certainties by the introduction of the subject into Congress, and by the attempt to reach slavery through that body. In this way the moral and religious action of the Antislavery Society on the South becomes a nullity. You give those States a point of union, round which they rally to a man; and, united here, they hold together more easily and firmly in regard to the whole subject. Unhappily, a like influence is exerted at the North. The agitation of the matter in Congress turns the majority of minds to the political aspect and political consequences of Abolitionism; and behind this banner the multitude are inaccessible to moral and philanthropic views of the subject. In these views, however, the strength of the cause lies. Whatever interrupts their agency is most pernicious.

"Antislavery is to triumph, not by force or appeals to interest, but by becoming a living part of the public conscience and religion. Just in proportion as it is complicated with political questions and feelings, it is shorn of its strength.

"If the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia were practicable, the expediency of the efforts now directed to that end would be less questionable. But I have never anticipated such a result. The South, united to a man, will always avail itself of party divisions at the North, sufficiently to secure a majority in Congress against such a measure.

What makes this more certain is the deliberate purpose of the South to secede, in the event of the union of the North in such legislative action. On this point, the South does not merely bluster, but is in earnest; and the knowledge that its mind is here fully made up will always prevent such a union of Northern members. The efforts against slavery in the District cannot, then, accomplish their declared end. They can serve the cause only by drawing attention to it, keeping men alive to it; but if they lead men to view it in a false light, to overlook its highest claims, do they serve it?

"I augur no good from the political action of the Abolitionists. Their business is with the conscience; and they lose their power over this, just in proportion as they mix up their cause with party passions. The questions which they propose to candidates for office bring out hollow answers, and make hypocrites, who, of course, are less trustworthy than before, and cannot be held to their profession in critical seasons. There is a class of politicians who will use Abolitionism to rise by, but will disgrace it by want of principle. You owe your success, as far as you have succeeded, to your unworldly, spiritual devotion to a good cause, and no policy can take the place of this. I hear less said now of your fanaticism, and more of your want of moral purity. I ascribe the change to your political action.

"I know how idle it is to attempt to tie down a great movement by precise rules. The force which is to achieve great revolutions, to sweep away the abuses of ages, will be more or less wild. We must accept enthusiasm with its evil as well as its good, if we accept it at all. Antislavery will run its race, with little change of direction from admonitions of friend or foe. I cannot, however, help desiring that its fervor and deep feeling may be turned to the best account,—that no part of its force may be lost. I wish not to cripple it, but to increase its efficiency.

"I abstain from publishing these views, because I am unwilling, without plain necessity, to find fault with an injured party, and because Antislavery has no great love for advice. I have therefore given you my mind in this form, and if you think any of your number would be interested by this letter, you are at liberty to communicate it to them.

"Your friend."

It will be seen from the foregoing letter, that Dr. Channing was chiefly desirous to awaken the hearts of his countrymen to the great spiritual truths involved in the Antislavery movement, and was fearful that the whole tone of feeling and action in regard to our great national sin and shame would be debased by the intermixture of political jealousies and intrigues. In fact, his cherished hope was, that Abolitionism — asserting as it did the very fundamental principles of justice, the essential rights of every human being, and the universal law of love — would widen and grow up into a *Church* of Practical Christianity, by whose influence the whole nation might be regenerated. A few letters written at various intervals will yet further illustrate his views.

"*Boston*, July 29, 1836.* Your letter of April 1st was very cheering to me. I felt that I had not labored in vain in my little work on Slavery. My aim was to oppose slavery on principles which, if admitted, would inspire resistance to all the wrongs, and reverence for all the rights, of human nature. I have no doubt as to the triumph of these principles, and my confidence is founded not on events, on outward progress, so much as on the power with which they work on my mind. In the response of my own soul to any great, unchangeable truth, I hear the voice of universal humanity. I can conceive that my feelings are individual, but not any great convictions of the intellect or lofty inspirations of the heart. These do not belong to me. They are universal. They will live and spread, when the individual who gave some faint utterance to them is gone."

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* To J. Blanco White.

"*May* 9, 1837.* I feel strongly, that, by preaching Christianity in its length and breadth, by bringing out its true spirit clearly, powerfully, in the language of deep conviction, we are advancing the Antislavery cause most effectually. Men will apply the truth so taught in a case like the present, that is, when a whole community are alive to a great subject. The common difficulty is, that great principles are not unfolded and enforced with a true understanding and profound feeling on the part of the preacher. Let him do his part, and the people generally may be left to make the application. I am less anxious that Antislavery should be preached, than that the spirit of Christianity should be set forth with clearness and energy. The great service which Antislavery is to do is to reveal this spirit with a new life and power.

"This is a greater work than to liberate the slave. There is something more terrible than slavery, and that is the spirit which enslaves. This spirit is in us all, is as strong in many who condemn as in those who uphold slavery. Let the axe be laid to the root of the tree. I do not mean that particular evils are never to be assailed. Far from it; but the great way to assail them is to strike at their principle. The Abolitionists are to do vastly more good by establishing principles than by attacking abuses. It is easy to do the last. Few can do the first. It is the insane love of money pervading the trading world which rivets the chains of the slave, — that covetousness, against which Jesus spoke in language of such fearful energy. Some hope that the present convulsion in the commercial community is to do good. It will, if it leads men to comprehend the great principle on which wealth is to be reared. The effect of mere suffering will be very temporary."

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* To Dr. Charles Follen.

"*December* 25, 1837.* I have just read the account of the Abolition debate. I cannot acquiesce in any restriction on the right of petition; but I must say that I anticipate no good from the agitation of the question of slavery in Congress. I look wholly to moral and religious influences for the removal of this evil, and I fear that these are weakened by bringing the subject before the national legislature. I wish to avoid awakening political passions and prejudices, or stirring up political action on the matter. The great obstruction to Antislavery sentiments at the North is the fear of dissolving the Union; and this fear gains strength from excitements in Congress about slavery. I petitioned for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, without the least hope of success, but simply to relieve myself from all responsibility for this outrage on human rights. It is certain that the South will command votes enough in the Free States to continue the present state of things, until the latter shall be thoroughly moved with the Antislavery spirit. Is it, then, best for the country or for Abolition to persevere in efforts which must fail, which disturb the Union without any counterbalancing good, and which interfere with the only labors from which success must be hoped? I would have the legislature of Massachusetts protest against slavery in the District, declare itself free from the guilt of the system, and at the same time declare, that, as resistance to it is now hopeless, we shall abstain until better times to remonstrate against it, remonstrance bringing only evil. I wish the Abolitionists would look at the matter calmly. That the cause is injured North and South, by the present course in regard to the District, I fear."

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* To Dr. Charles Follen.

Though Dr. Channing's wish to concentrate the attention of his fellow-citizens upon the principles of humanity, which were the life of the Antislavery movement, was thus strong, he was yet awake to the importance of limiting the growth of the slave power, and most anxious to break the yoke which it had so skilfully imposed on Northern freemen. It was in this year of 1837, that he saw the urgent necessity of making a determined political resistance to the grasping spirit of the faction of slaveholders. The Texas plot — generated by subtle policy and slowly matured by worldliness — was born. The design of an unlimited extension of the slave system, by means of a professedly free government, was asserted with unblushing effrontery as the fulfilment of our national destiny. From the time when the devoted Benjamin Lundy first exposed the nefarious project of the dismemberment of Mexico, all Antislavery men had been in a measure prepared for the coming struggle. But in 1837 the lamentable fact became evident, that political profligacy had insinuated its fatal corruptions into the very heart of Congress and the Administration; and again Dr. Channing heard himself summoned by the stern call of duty to break off the train of his favorite thoughts, and, though sick and weak, to make one more effort to rouse in his countrymen the spirit of freemen. In July, 1837, he wrote thus to Dr. Tuckerman.

"I am engaged in an important work. I have been thinking for some time, that, if nobody would write about the annexation of Texas to this country, I must do it; and since

Mr. Phillips left me I have been as busy as a beaver, and made such progress, that, if my strength holds out, I shall finish my work by the beginning of the next week. It will be a very serious affair, and I need counsel. I should like to read it to you and Mr. Phillips. Has he gone, or will he be in Boston? Can you think of any other person who should hear it? I have thought of Mr. Mann. If I come the next week, it will be only for a day. Nothing is to be said of my labors, for I shall not publish, unless, after consultation, I see my way clear. I shall provoke hostilities such as I have never met. But no matter. I am doing right."

On the 30th of July, he thus announced the completion of his task.

" My work is done, save a short conclusion. I have given to it more time than was good for me, but I supposed it should appear at once, and I thank God for strength to do it. How it will seem to me, when I read it over deliberately, I cannot tell. It now seems to me fitted to its end."

The Letter to Mr. Clay was immediately published, and for the time averted the threatened wrong. The gratification which Dr. Channing felt at the accomplishment of his work appears in the following letter, which is of interest, also, as showing his moderate estimate of his success and his wise forecast.

" *September* 12, 1837.* Your letter received yesterday gave me great pleasure. I rejoice that you, with others in whom I confide, think my Letter fitted to its end. That it should do any good ought, perhaps, to surprise me, when I think of my unfitness for the work. How painful, that I should be driven to a task lying beyond my province, by the unwillingness of others to undertake it! My success does not make me forget that I have done very little, and that much remains to be done. The Letter ought to be followed up by an able exposure of the arguments in favor of the annexation of Texas. Who will do this? I had no time to take up this part of the subject, for I deferred writing till just before the session of Congress, and it was thought important that the Letter should appear immediately. I feel, too, how much more ably this branch may be treated by some one in active or public life.

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* To Dr. Charles Follen.

"I have had the means of ascertaining some of the objections which will be made to my Letter, and of the arguments in favor of annexation. 1. All design on the part of the South and West to subjugate Texas, especially for the extension of slavery, is disclaimed, and will be indignantly disclaimed. 2. The design of annexing Texas to us, previously to the recognition of its independence by Mexico, will be disclaimed by many who yet are bent on the annexation. I suppose the public feeling against the measure will lead to new efforts on the part of our government to secure the recognition by Mexico. 3. The great argument is, that Texas, being independent, will be a slave country, and that there will be more and worse slavery in it separated from us than united. It will be said, that the United States, anxious to supply that market, will exclude slaves from Africa. This is a consideration worth looking at. 4. In case of the annexation, it will be maintained that the ascendency of the population will remain with the Free States. 5. The dangers or evils of an independent English state in that quarter will be dwelt upon. You undoubtedly meet with other arguments in the papers at New York. I should like to know them all. Is there no one to go over the ground calmly, ably?"

Dr. Channing thus prophetically sketched the sure results of our national crime.

"By this act, our country will enter on a career of encroachment, war, and crime, and will merit and incur the punishment and woe of aggravated wrong-doing. The seizure of Texas will not stand alone. It will darken our future history. It will be linked by an iron necessity to long-continued deeds of rapine and blood. Ages may not see the catastrophe of the tragedy, the first scene of which we are so ready to enact. . . . . . Texas is a country conquered by our citizens; and the annexation of it to our Union will be the beginning of conquests, which, unless arrested and beaten back by a just and kind Providence, will stop only at the Isthmus of Darien. Henceforth, we must cease to cry, Peace, peace. Our eagle will whet, not gorge, its appetite on its first victim; and will snuff a more tempting quarry, more alluring blood, in every new region which opens southward. To annex Texas is to declare perpetual war with Mexico. . . . . . Texas is the first step to Mexico. The moment we plant our authority on Texas, the boundaries of those two countries will become nominal, will be little more than lines on the sand of the sea-shore. . . . . . Can Mexico look without alarm on the approaches of this ever-growing tide? Is she prepared to be a passive prey, — to shrink and surrender without a struggle? Is she not strong in her hatred, if not in her fortresses or skill, — strong enough to make war a dear and bloody game? . . . . . Even were the dispositions of our government most pacific and opposed to encroachment, the annexation of Texas would almost certainly embroil us with Mexico. . . . . . Have we counted the cost of establishing and making perpetual these hostile relations with Mexico? Will wars, begun in rapacity, carried on so far from the centre of the confederation, and of consequence little checked or controlled by Congress, add strength to our institutions, or cement our union, or exert a healthy moral influence on rulers or people? What limits can be set to the atrocities of such conflicts? What limits to the treasures which must be lavished on such distant borders? What limits to the patronage and power which such distant expeditions must accumulate in the hands of the Executive? Are the blood and hard-earned wealth of the older States to be poured out like water, to protect and revenge a new people, whose character and condition will plunge them into perpetual wrongs?"*

In his Letter to Mr. Clay,† Dr. Channing has so fully explained his views in regard to the annexation of Texas, that there is but one point upon which any thing remains to be added. He foresaw in the successful accomplishment of this nefarious project the *destruction of the national bond of union.* In this emergency, his mind was perfectly made up as to duty, as all knew who were intimate with him. He but expressed his calm, deliberate, unfaltering purpose, when he declared, —

> "For one, I say, that, earnestly as I deprecate the separation of these States, and though this event would disappoint most cherished hopes for my country, still I can submit to it more readily than to the reception of Texas into the confederacy. I shrink from that contamination. I shrink from an act which is to pledge us as a people to robbery and war, to the work of upholding and extending slavery without limitation or end. I do not desire to share the responsibility, or to live under the laws of a government adopting such a policy, and swayed by such a spirit, as would be expressed by the incorporation of Texas with our country."‡
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> "To me it seems not only the right, but the duty, of the Free States, in case of the annexation of Texas, to say to

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* Works, Vol. II., pp. 204-209.

† Ibid., pp. 183-260.

‡ Ibid., p. 238.

the Slaveholding States, 'We regard this act as the dissolution of the Union. The essential conditions of the national compact are violated.'"*

Dr. Channing valued the Union, indeed, as an "inestimable good, to be prized not merely or chiefly for its commercial benefits or any pecuniary advantages, but simply as Union."† To him it was not "a Means, but an End, ... our highest national interest, next to liberty, ... to which every thing should be yielded but truth, honor, and liberty."‡ But at the same time his conviction was clear, that when by this union "the most sacred rights and dearest interests of humanity" were violated, then it "would be bought at too dear a rate; then it would be changed from a virtuous bond into a league of crime and shame."§ And he summed up his solemn determination in these emphatic words: — "We will not become partners in your wars with Mexico and Europe, in your schemes of spreading and perpetuating slavery, in your hopes of conquest, in your unrighteous spoils. . . . . . A pacific division in the first instance seems to me to threaten less contention than a lingering, feverish dissolution of the Union, such as must be expected under this fatal innovation."|| Dr. Channing was no boaster; he was as firm as he was moderate; and, had he lived, he would unquestionably have put forth his full power to make good these words. It is but justice to him, therefore, to record, that in private conversation he never bated one jot or tittle from these uncompromising declarations of duty. How, in the crisis through

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* Works, Vol. II., p. 237.

† Ibid., Vol. VI., p. 333.

‡ Ibid., Vol. II., p. 144.

§ Ibid.

|| Ibid., p. 238.

which the nation is passing, he would have acted, it might be presumptuous to predict; but there need be no hesitation in asserting that he would never have convicted himself of unmeaning rant by silent submission to a deed which "brands Slavery on the forehead of the Nation as its great Idea."[*] It was his privilege to be taken away before the crimson curtain of a war of conquest for the propagation of slavery was lifted by professed freemen. But years before this fatal consummation, he had uttered the hope, "that Providence would beat back and humble our cupidity and ambition."[†] For our sakes, and the sake of our children, we must mourn that he was not spared to make one effort more to hold back the "republic from dying by its own hands."[‡]

It was in the autumn of this year, 1837, that Dr. Channing's faith and firmness were put to a somewhat severe test. On the 7th of November, the Rev. Elijah P. Lovejoy, editor of the Alton Observer, in Illinois, was shot by one of a mob, while defending the building containing his press. This event, so fitly consummating the long series of outrages committed or tolerated against the Abolitionists, excited a profound sensation. Even those, whose caution, social connections, and business interests had hitherto made them hostile or indifferent to the Antislavery movement, were startled. And the occasion seemed the right one, therefore, to arouse the people to a consciousness of their duties as freemen.

In a conversation with a friend, Samuel E. Sewall, Esq., Dr. Channing suggested the plan of a meeting of the citizens of Boston in Faneuil Hall, to protest against the lawless violence which had at length resulted in the destruction of life. A petition to the city government was accordingly drawn up by that gentleman for the use of Faneuil Hall, and having been headed by Dr. Channing, and the requisite number of signers obtained, was presented. It was immediately followed by a counter petition numerously signed. In this dark day, the taint of "Abolitionism" was so much dreaded, especially in large trading communities, that influential men readily came forward to oppose even an expression of indignant remonstrance against the violence under which Abolitionists had suffered. Under their influence the hall was refused, and from considerations which will appear in the subsequent documents. Thus an issue was made for freedom of speech and the supremacy of law, in which Dr. Channing found himself most unexpectedly involved as a principal.

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[*] Works, Vol. II., p. 227. [†] Ibid., p. 218. [‡] Ibid., p. 227.

The results of this contest were important in their silent operation on public opinion. They were important, also, in a personal point of view, for many of the early and near friends of Dr. Channing fell away from him. The absurd notion was originated, at this time, that he intended to change his calling for a political one. The coldness toward him which then began to manifest itself was never entirely removed, and suspicions with regard to the purity of his aim were cherished by a few, even to the end of his life. They could not comprehend the depth of his desire to make religion the controlling principle in all human affairs. This experience was instructive, too, to himself, and though he had always regarded public events from a religious point of view, yet thenceforward he looked more to the direct application of Christianity to social and political life. He said soon afterward to a friend, that he was glad of what had occurred, as it had enabled him to give a practical manifestation of opinions which might otherwise have been considered merely theoretical.

On the second of December the following appeal was published in the Boston Daily Advertiser, prefaced by some editorial remarks sustaining the course of the city government.

" TO THE CITIZENS OF BOSTON.

" I feel that I owe it to my fellow-citizens and myself, to offer some remarks on the proceedings of the Board of Aldermen, in relation to a petition presented to them for the use of Faneuil Hall, in order that there might be an expression of public sentiment in regard to the late ferocious assault on the liberty of the press at Alton. Had I for a moment imagined, that, by placing my name at the head of this petition, I was to bring myself before the public as I have done, I should have been solicitous to avoid the distinction. But the past cannot be recalled; and having performed this act from a conviction of duty, I cannot regret it. My only desire is, that its true character may be understood by my fellow-citizens, who will not, I believe, when they know the truth, give the sanction of their approbation to the proceedings of the government.

" The petition was as follows: —

" ' Boston, Nov. 27, 1837.

" ' *To the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Boston.*

" ' The undersigned, citizens of Boston, request that the use of Faneuil Hall may be granted to them on Monday evening, Dec. 4th, for the purpose of holding a public meeting to notice in a suitable manner the recent murder, in the city of Alton, of a native of New England, and citizen of the free State of Illinois, who fell in defence of the freedom of the press.'

"This petition was rejected by the Board of Aldermen, on the ground, that the resolutions which might be passed at the proposed meeting would not express the public opinion of the city, and would even create a disgraceful confusion in Faneuil Hall, or, in other words, would excite a mob. I need not say to those who know me, that I am incapable of proposing a measure which should seem to me fitted to expose the city to tumult. The truth is, that the possibility of such an occurrence did not enter my thoughts. The object of the proposed meeting was so obvious, so unexceptionable, so righteous, and had such claims on every friend of order and liberty, that I did not pause a moment when I was requested to sign the petition. I should have pronounced it impossible that a man of common sense and common honesty could view and pass over the tragedy of Alton as a matter touching merely the interests of one or another party. To me it had a character of its own, which stood out in terrible relief. I saw in it systematic, deliberate murder, for the destruction of the freedom of the press. The petition was presented for one purpose and one only, namely, that the good people of Boston might manifest in the most solemn and impressive manner their deep abhorrence of the spirit of mobs which threatens all our institutions, and particularly might express their utter, uncompromising reprobation of the violence which has been offered to the freedom of speech and the press. The Freedom of the Press, — the sacredness of this right, — the duty of maintaining it against all assaults, — this was the great idea to which the meeting was intended to give utterance. I was requested to prepare the resolutions; and I was meditating this work when I heard the decision of the Board of Aldermen. My single aim was, to frame such resolutions as should pledge all who should concur in them to the exertion of their whole influence for the suppression of mobs, for the discouragement of violence, for the vindication of the supremacy of the laws, and especially for the assertion and defence of the freedom of the press. My intention was, to exclude all reference to parties, all topics about which there could be a division among the friends of liberty. No other resolutions could have been drawn up in consistency with the petition; and the Board of Aldermen had no right to expect any others.

"To intimate that such resolutions would not express the public opinion of Boston, and would even create a mob, is to pronounce the severest libel on this city. It is to assert that peaceful citizens cannot meet here in safety to strengthen and pledge themselves against violence and in defence of the dearest and most sacred rights. And has it come to this? Has Boston fallen so low? May not its citizens be trusted to come together to express the great principles of liberty, for which their fathers died? Are our fellow-citizens to be *murdered* in the act of defending their property, and of asserting the right of free discussion; and is it unsafe in this metropolis, once the refuge of liberty, to express abhorrence of the deed? If such be our degradation, we ought to know the awful truth; and those among us who retain a portion of the spirit of our ancestors should set themselves to work to recover their degenerate posterity. But I do not believe in this degeneracy. The people of Boston may be trusted. There is a moral soundness in this community on the great points involved in the petition which has been rejected. There is among us a deep abhorrence of the spirit of violence which is spreading through our land; and from this city ought to go forth a voice to awaken the whole country to its danger, to the growing peril of the substitution of lawless force for the authority of the laws.

This, in truth, was the great object of those who proposed the meeting, to bring out a loud, general expression of opinion and feeling, which would awe the spirit of mobs, and would especially secure the press from violence. Instead of this, what is Boston now doing? Into what scale is this city now thrown? Boston now says to Alton, 'Go on; destroy the press; put down the liberty of speech; and, still more, murder the citizen who asserts it; and no united voice shall here be lifted up against you, lest a like violence should break forth among ourselves.'

"It is this view of the rejection of the petition which deeply moves me. That a petition, bearing my name, should be denied, would not excite a moment's thought or feeling. But that this city, which I have been proud to call my home, should be so exhibited to the world, and should exert this disastrous influence on the country,—this I cannot meet with indifference.

"I earnestly hope that my fellow-citizens will demand the public meeting which has been refused, with a voice which cannot be denied; but unless so called, I do not desire that it should be held. If not demanded by acclamation, it would very possibly become a riot. A government which announces its expectation of a mob does virtually, though unintentionally, summon a mob, and would then cast all the blame of it on the 'rash men' who might become its victims.

"But is there no part of our country, where a voice of power shall be lifted up in defence of rights incomparably more precious than the temporary interests which have often crowded Faneuil Hall to suffocation? Is the whole country to sleep? An event has occurred which ought to thrill the hearts of this people as the heart of one man. A martyr to the freedom of the press has fallen among us. A citizen has been *murdered* in defence of the right of free discussion. I do not ask whether he was Christian or unbeliever, whether he was Abolitionist or Colonizationist. He has been *murdered* in exercising what I hold to be the dearest right of the citizen. Nor is this a solitary act of violence. It is the consummation of a long series of assaults on public order, on freedom, on the majesty of the laws. I ask, Is there not a spot in the country whence a voice of moral reprobation, of patriotic remonstrance, of solemn warning, shall go forth to awaken the slumbering community? There are, indeed, in various places, meetings of Antislavery societies, to express their sorrow for a fallen brother. But in these I take no part. What I desired was, that the citizens of Boston, of all parties, should join as one man in putting down the reign of terror by the force of opinion, and in spreading a shield over our menaced liberties. I felt, that the very fact, that the majority of the people here are opposed to the peculiar opinions of our murdered fellow-citizen, would give increased authority to our condemnation of this ferocious deed.

"The principles on which I have acted in this affair are such as have governed my whole life. This is not the first time in which I have come forward to defend the freedom of opinion, the freedom of speech, the freedom of the press. Not a few of my fellow-citizens will bear witness to the sincerity of my devotion to this cause. The rights of a human being to inquire, to judge, and to express his honest conviction, — these are dear to me as life; and if I ask a distinction in society, it is that of being the defender of these. I cannot, I will not, tamely and silently, see these trampled down in the person of a fellow-citizen, be he rich or poor, be he friend or foe, be he the advocate or the opposer of what I deem the truth.

"That in these sentiments I have the sympathy of my fellow-citizens, I cannot doubt. I am confident, that, when the true import of the petition which I have signed is understood, the vast majority will agree with me in the fitness of the action which it was intended to promote. I have no distrust of my fellow-citizens. They are true to the principles of liberty; and the time, I hope, is near, when the stain now thrown on our ancient and free city will be wiped away, — when a petition, headed by a worthier name, will assemble the wise and good, the friends of order and liberty of all sects and parties, to bear their solemn testimony against the spirit of misrule and violence, to express their devotion to the laws, and their unconquerable purpose to maintain the freedom of speech and of the press.

"Wm. E. Channing."

The issue thus made with the city authorities was rendered still more complicated by the fact that the municipal election was close at hand. This caused the motives of men who took an active part in the affair to be regarded with party jealousy. No effort, however, it is just to say, was put forth by either party to create "political capital" out of the question.

In answer to the appeal, a gathering of citizens was held, on the evening of December 3d, in the old Supreme Court room, — a room not large, but crowded on that occasion, — to consider "the reasons assigned by the Mayor and Aldermen for withholding the use of Faneuil Hall, and to act in the premises as they might deem expedient." Resolutions were adopted concerning the freedom of the press and of discussion, and the right of the people peaceably to assemble. It was also resolved to circulate widely through the city the same petition, headed as before by William E. Channing, with only a change in the time of the meeting. Before adjourning, the following expression of respect was passed: —

"*Resolved*, That the thanks of this meeting be presented to the Rev. William E. Channing, for the eloquent, elevated, and dignified vindication he has made, in his published Address, of the right of the citizens to assemble together for the purpose of 'pledging themselves against violence and in defence of the dearest and most sacred rights'; and that he be requested by this meeting to prepare the resolutions to be presented at the proposed meeting in Faneuil Hall on the 8th instant."

The city authorities immediately signified their willingness, without waiting to test the number of names, to open the hall, and it was under these circumstances that the meeting was held, at ten o'clock on the morning of December 8th. The large hall, capable of holding five thousand persons, was crowded early. On all sides were earnest and anxious faces. The Hon. Jonathan Phillips, Dr. Channing's intimate friend, was called to preside. A prayer was offered by the Rev. E. M. P. Wells, who knelt on the platform before the assembly; and then Dr. Channing addressed the meeting with the following remarks, which he had previously prepared and committed to memory. Some of the sentiments at first called forth a strong expression of applause, which the speaker checked by begging his fellow-citizens to evince their approbation by their silent attention. The request was instantly complied with.

"Mr. Chairman, — My relation to this meeting not only authorizes, but requires, me to offer at its commencement some remarks on the purpose for which we are now assembled. It is not, indeed, without reluctance, that I rise to speak in a place and under circumstances to me so new and unusual; but I am commanded to make this effort by a voice which I cannot disobey, by a sense of what I owe to myself, to this community, and to the cause of freedom.

"I know that there are those who say that this is not my place, — that my voice should be heard only in the holy temples of religion. I ask, Is there nothing holy here? Was there nothing holy in the spirit of our fathers, when within these walls they invoked the blessing of God on their struggles for freedom? Every place may be made holy by holy deeds. Nothing, nothing, Sir, would tempt me to come here to mingle in the conflicts of party. But when a great question of humanity and justice is discussed here, when a number of my fellow-citizens meet here to lift up their voices against violence and murder, and in support of the laws and the press, I feel that my place *is here.*

"I rise simply to state the object of this meeting. It has been misrepresented; I do not say intentionally. I do not come here to charge any of my fellow-citizens with unworthy motives. But there has been misrepresentation. You have been told that the professed object of the meeting is not its real one; that it was called to serve the purposes of a party; that it is an imposition. I grieve that this language has been used. It shows how little faith man has in man, how slow he is to ascribe good purposes to his brother, how prone to see by-ends and bad ends in honorable undertakings. Sir, there does exist such a thing as purity of purpose. It is possible for a man to desire freedom, not only for himself, but for his whole race. It is possible for a man to desire that the laws may guard, not only his own possessions, but the rights of every human being; and when laws and rights and freedom are trodden under foot, not once, but again and again, and with increasing fury, it *is* possible for a man sincerely to feel that he ought to meet with those of a like mind, and bear testimony with them against these atrocities. Sir, are not here motives enough and of sufficient force to bring men together, and to crowd this hall, — motives enough, and more than enough, to explain this meeting? And why, then, look beyond these, — why look for others and base ones?

"I can say with confidence, Sir, that this meeting had a good origin. Call it unwise, if you will, but its purpose was pure, was generous and worthy of Christian freemen. I claim to know something of its origin; for I believe no one had more to do with calling it than myself. Soon after the recent tragedy at Alton, I was called upon and requested to deliver a discourse on that sad event. For various reasons, I declined so to do. I said to the friend who made the request, and I said it from my own mind and without any hint from another, that I wished that the citizens of Boston would, in some public manner, express their abhorrence of the lawless spirit which had prompted to this and kindred deeds, and which had broken out here as well as at a distance. On the next day, a petition was sent me, embodying the suggestion which I had made the evening before. To this petition I affixed my name. In signing it, my great apprehension was, that the absorption of our citizens in their private affairs would make them indifferent to the subject, so that a meeting sufficiently numerous for the desired impression might not be obtained. The idea of opposition to it did not enter my thoughts, and up to this hour I find a difficulty in comprehending, in making real to myself, the opposition it has excited. I signed the petition with the full understanding that the meeting should bear no relation to party, but should comprehend all citizens of whatever sect or party whose spirits had been stirred, as mine was, by the fearful progress of lawless force.

"On me, then, Sir, not a little of the responsibility of this meeting rests. I owe it to truth and honor to avow it, and I am ready to bear this responsibility. I have no misgivings. I have a distinct consciousness, that the part which I act becomes a man, a citizen, and a Christian. I am willing that the report of what I am doing should go through the length and breadth of the land. I am willing it should cross the ocean. I care not how far, how wide, it is known, that, at this moment of increasing peril from lawless force, I labored to bring my fellow-citizens together, in order that, by a solemn public act, they might help to put down civil convulsion and bloodshed, — might assert the insulted supremacy of the laws, and might pledge themselves to sustain the endangered rights of the citizen. Sir, it is not impossible that the report of this meeting may cross the ocean, and may form a part of the enduring records of this city. I trust that it will not detract from the glory of our beloved city. I trust that the gentlemen who are now to address you will feel the dignity, the sacredness, of this occasion. I trust that they will rise above all local, personal, party considerations. I rejoice that the opening of this hall to us by the fathers of our city has put to rest one question which lately excited us, and I trust that no reference to this will disturb our harmony. In a word, I trust that this assembly will speak a language worthy of Boston; and worthy of those illustrious men, who, in times that tried men's souls, made these walls echo with their thrilling voices, and left here a testimony, which will never die, to the principles of freedom."

The following resolutions, written by Dr. Channing, were then presented to the meeting by Benjamin F. Hallet, Esq.

" *Resolved*, That our civil and religious liberties, which have come down to us from our fathers, sealed with their blood, are a most precious bequest, and that when liberty is invaded, this consecrated hall is the chosen spot where its friends should meet together to pledge themselves to its support.

" *Resolved*, That we are assembled here to assume the badge of no party, to narrow ourselves to no local or temporary interests, but to maintain the supremacy of the laws, and to give expression and support to those universal principles of justice and freedom on which popular institutions and the hopes of philanthropy rest.

"*Resolved*, That it has pleased God to commit to this people, above all others, the cause of human freedom; that we are called to the high office of manifesting the power of free institutions to ennoble and bless a people; and that in proving false to this trust, we shall not only cast away our own happiness, but shall betray the interests of the human race, and shall deserve the condemning sentence of all nations and of future times.

"*Resolved*, That to offer violence to the rights of the citizen in a free country, where these rights are understood and recognized and taken under the protection of the laws, is a more heinous crime, and of more fatal influence, than the oppressions of absolute hereditary power.

"*Resolved*, That among our rights, we hold none more dear than the freedom of speech and the press, that we look to this as the guardian of all other rights, and the chief spring of human improvement; so that to wrest it from the citizen, by violence and murder, is to inflict the deepest wound on the republic.

"*Resolved*, That, by the ordination of Providence, we are passing through a stage of society in which principles and institutions are subjected to the severest scrutiny; and that, at such a period, earnest conflicts of opinion cannot be escaped, and ought to be cheerfully endured as inseparable from the exercise of a privilege which is essential to the progress and best interests of the human race.

"*Resolved*, That it is the fundamental idea of the freedom of speech and the press, that the citizen shall be protected from violence, in uttering opinions opposed to those which prevail around him; that if by such freedom nothing more were intended than the liberty of publishing what none would deny, then absolute governments might boast of it as loudly as republics; so that to put the citizen in peril, on the ground that he presumptuously perseveres in uttering what is unpopular, or what the majority do not approve, is to assail this freedom in its very foundation, and to destroy its very life.

" *Resolved*, That in a free country, the laws, enacted according to the prescriptions of the constitution, are the voice of the people, and are the only forms by which the sovereignty of the people is exercised and expressed; and that of consequence a mob, or a combination of citizens for the purpose of suspending by force the administration of the laws, or of taking away rights which these have guarantied, is treason against the people, a contempt of their sovereignty, and deserves to be visited with exemplary punishment.

" *Resolved*, That the spirit of mobs is a spirit of indiscriminate destruction; that when the press shall have become its prey, its next victim will be property; that there is no power on earth so terrible as human passion, unbridled by principle and law, and inflamed to madness by the sympathies of a crowd; and that if we silently and passively abandon any portion of our fellow-citizens to this power, we shall have no right to complain when our own turn shall come to feed its rapaciousness and fury.

" *Resolved*, That in this country the mightiest influence is public opinion; that mobs cannot prevail without a criminal apathy in the public mind; that one of the darkest omens of our times is the indifference with which the nation has looked on the triumphs of lawless force; and that the time is now come for this people to shake off their lethargy, to vindicate the insulted majesty of the laws, and to pronounce a sentence on unprincipled violence, which the reckless and turbulent will be unable to withstand.

" *Resolved*, That when a fellow-citizen has been destroyed in defending property and the press, it is alike weak and criminal to reproach him as responsible for the deed, because he refused to surrender his undoubted rights at the command of his murderers; that with equal justice the highwayman may throw the blame of his crime on the slaughtered traveller, who refuses, when summoned, to surrender his purse; and even if our fellow-citizen, who recently fell in defence of the freedom of the press, was driven by the violence which assailed him into rash and injudicious deeds, we are bound so to express our grief as in no degree to screen his lawless assailants from the reprobation which is their due.

"*Resolved*, That the Christian is not authorized by his religion to look with indifference on public affairs, and that he ought particularly to be roused by acts of cruelty and violence which degrade our country to the level of heathenism.

"*Resolved*, That we deem this occasion too solemn for the language of passion; that we have come to this place to establish and diffuse the principles of order and peace; that we acknowledge our obligation to cherish in the community a spirit of mutual forbearance and good-will; and that we earnestly desire, whilst we vindicate the rights of speech and the press, that these may be most conscientiously exercised in obedience to the dictates of justice and philanthropy.

"*Resolved*, That our affection for our country is undiminished by the public crimes by which it is dishonored; that we implore for it the blessing of Almighty God; and that we pledge ourselves, according to our power, to sustain its laws, to give stability to its union, and to transmit its free institutions unimpaired to posterity."

These resolutions were supported by George S. Hillard, Esq., in a speech which was listened to with great attention, and which was pronounced in the papers of the day to have been "fervid in eloquence, chaste in language, and noble in sentiment." Its effect was at once elevating and soothing. The vast multitude seemed to be of one mind, and all signs betokened a meeting in the highest degree honorable to the old "Cradle of Liberty." But the powers of evil purposed otherwise. The respectful order was but a delusive calm. One third of the persons assembled, perhaps, were Abolitionists or free-discussionists ; another third were curious on-lookers, eager chiefly for excitement, and swayed to and fro by every speaker ; but there was also a party gathered there, at once from counting-rooms and cellars, who were deadly foes to the Antislavery movement, and only waiting a fit chance for outbreak. The occasion came. The Attorney-General mounted the platform. He pronounced the resolutions to be, so far as he had heard them, " abstract propositions " ; said that " it would be idle and useless to call this great meeting of the citizens together merely to affirm by solemn vote what nobody would have the hardihood to deny " ; demanded to know how Mr. Lovejoy had merited the distinction of being thus commemorated ; accused him of inciting the slaves to rise upon their masters ; compared the slaves to wild beasts thirsting for blood ; asked whether " that man had not died as the fool dieth " ; likened the mob of Alton to the fathers of the Revolution ; and wound up by saying, " to sympathize with those who have been mobbed, and whose own rashness and imprudence have incited the mob, is not the best way to put down mobs." * This speech, of course, awakened the latent emotions of all parties, and shouts of approval and hisses of contempt alternately drowned each other.

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* The Daily Advocate, December 9th, 1837.

It was in the midst of this uproar that the chairman, turning to his friend, said, with a smile, "Can you stand thunder?" "Such thunder as this," was the answer, "in any measure." Dr. Channing was sitting at the time upon the platform, and looking down over the surging waves of the excited crowd with undisturbed serenity. For a few moments it seemed doubtful what would be the result of this appeal from one of the highest officers of the State to popular prejudice and passion. And then it was that there occurred a scene which always remained bright in Dr. Channing's memory. Wendell Phillips, Esq., a young lawyer, whose rare powers of commanding and brilliant eloquence were then unknown, and who had no influence to sustain him but associations connected with the honored family of which he was a branch, took the stage. He began by expressing his "surprise at the sentiments of the last speaker, — surprise, not only at such sentiments from such a man, but at the applause they had elicited within these walls." Attempts were made to silence the bold youth, but on he went until he reached this climax of his philippic. "I thought those pictured lips," pointing to the portraits in the hall, "would have broken into voice to rebuke the recreant American, the slanderer of the dead. The gentleman said, that he should sink into insignificance, if he dared to gainsay the principles of these resolutions. Sir, for the sentiments he has uttered, on soil consecrated by the prayers of Puritans and the blood of patriots, the earth should have yawned and swallowed him up." Here the tumult of applause and counter-applause became deafening, and some time elapsed before order could be restored. Dr. Channing frequently referred to the tone, look, gesture, with which this young man, beaming with truth, upborne by justice, strong in rectitude, careless of consequences, in the hall consecrated by grand associations, and before a vast assembly of fellow-citizens half hostile to freedom, poured forth the vial of his indignation, as "morally sublime." That brave deed commanded unwilling respect from all, and won the day. The Hon. William Sturgis had already, in an earlier part of Mr. Phillips's remarks, bespoken for him a fair hearing, thus throwing the weight of his high commercial character on the right side; and George Bond, Esq., justly respected by the community for business energy and Christian charity, now followed up the speech in a most manly, generous, direct appeal to the consciences and hearts of the assembly. The vote was then taken, and the resolutions were adopted by a large majority. And so "*free discussion of the subject of free discussion*" was secured in Boston. "Stout men, my husband for one," wrote a spectator of this scene, "came home that day and 'lifted up their voices and wept.' Dr. Channing did not know how dangerous an experiment — as people count danger — he adventured. *We* knew that we must send the children out of town, and sleep in our day-garments that night, unless free discussion prevailed."

On the 25th of December, Dr. Channing thus summed up the history of this eventful struggle in a letter to Dr. Follen.

"I send you an account of the proceedings at Faneuil Hall, as you desire. I gave the movers of it to understand that I should not speak; but when I found that the opposition to the meeting made it difficult to get speakers, I felt myself bound to give up my objections, and to say a few words. I little expected, when I signed the petition, to get myself into a fray; but the path of duty was plain; and a man ought not to talk of difficulty when he sees clearly the right. Good was done to myself; but I am not sure that much was done to others."

Dr. Channing's course in relation to the Faneuil Hall meeting identified him before the public with the "Abolitionists" proper, as he had never been before; and the consciousness of this added claim to their confidence, as well as an increased sense of responsibility for the conduct of the Antislavery movement, made him desire to address to them some words of counsel. That he had meditated such a communication even earlier appears from the following letter.

"*Newport*, October 26, 1837.* There is one subject on which I should like to write, but can promise nothing, and that is the character of Abolitionism. I should like to point out what I think its defects and dangers, and to do something towards helping people to comprehend it. Perhaps the Abolitionists themselves are not aware how little they are understood, both at the North and the South. They are supposed to be partly heated by ideas of rights and liberty, partly fevered by exaggerated ideas of the slave's sufferings, partly stirred up by the passion for notoriety. That they have an *affection* for the colored man as a *man* and a *brother*, and wish to remove what crushes his humanity, is not suspected. The South cannot conceive of this feeling, nor is it very comprehensible at the North. Your *brotherly feeling* towards the slave is a mystery, to a degree which, perhaps, you do not suspect. I should like to scatter this delusion. Could I help to make people understand what a stream of real love is flowing toward the slave, perhaps I should do him more good than by a general vindication of his rights. It would be vastly more difficult, but it would open his way to other hearts. Perhaps the difficulty is to be overcome by the Abolitionists alone, by their persevering, unaffected kindness to the colored race. Are you aware that a master feels as if you were injuring him by presuming to *love* his slaves and to care for their happiness? It is as if you should take a special liking to his horses or dogs, and think of ministering to their comforts. They are all *his*."

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* To Dr. Charles Follen.

But the sad event of Mr. Lovejoy's murder, while in the act of forcibly defending his civil rights, gave a new direction to Dr. Channing's thoughts, and made him still more solicitous than before to infuse a higher spirit of calmness, candor, wisdom, into the hearts of those whom he so deeply honored for their humanity and heroism. Immediately after the Faneuil Hall meeting, therefore, he sent a letter to the Liberator, extracts from which will fully explain his views.

" *Boston*, December 14, 1837. My friends, — A recent event induces me to address to you a few remarks. I trust you will not ascribe them to a love of dictation, and especially that you will not think me capable of uttering a word of censure, in deference to the prejudices and passions of your opposers. My sympathies are with the oppressed and persecuted. I have labored, in a darker day than this, to vindicate your rights; and nothing would tempt me at this moment to speak a disapproving word, if I thought I should give the slightest countenance to the violence under which you have suffered. I have spoken of the slight service which I have rendered, not as a claim for gratitude, — for I only performed a plain duty, — but as giving me a title to a candid construction of what I am now to offer.

"You well know that I have not been satisfied with all your modes of operation. I have particularly made objections to the organization and union of numerous and wide-spread societies for the subversion of slavery. I have believed, however, that many of the dangerous tendencies of such an association would be obviated by your adoption of what is called 'the peace principle'; in other words, by your unwillingness to use physical force for self-defence. To this feature of your society I have looked as a pledge that your zeal, even if it should prove excessive, would not work much harm. You can judge, then, of the sorrow with which I heard of the tragedy of Alton, where one of your respected brethren fell with arms in his hands. I felt, indeed, that his course was justified by the laws of his country, and by the established opinions and practice of the civilized world. I felt, too, that the violence under which he fell, regarded as an assault on the press and our dearest rights, deserved the same reprobation from the friends of free institutions as if he had fallen an unresisting victim. But I felt that a cloud had gathered over your society, and that a dangerous precedent had been given in the cause of humanity. So strong was this impression, that, whilst this event found its way into other pulpits, I was unwilling to make it the topic of a religious discourse, but preferred to express my reprobation of it in another place, where it would be viewed only in its bearings on civil and political rights. My hope was, that the members of your society, whilst they would do honor to the fearless spirit of your fallen brother, would still, with one loud voice, proclaim their disapprobation of his last act, and their sorrow that through him a cause of philanthropy had been stained with blood. In this I am sorry to say that I have been disappointed. I have seen, indeed, no justification of the act. I have seen a few disapproving sentences, but no such clear and general testimony against this error of the lamented

Lovejoy as is needed to give assurance against its repetition. . . . . .

"It seems to me of great importance, that you should steadily disavow this resort to force by Mr. Lovejoy. There are peculiar reasons for it. Your position in our country is peculiar, and makes it important that you should be viewed as incapable of resorting to violent means.

"In the first place, you are a large and growing party, and are possessed with a fervent zeal, such as has been unknown since the beginning of our Revolutionary conflict. At the same time, you are distrusted, and, still more, hated, by a multitude of your fellow-citizens. Here, then, are the elements of deadly strife. From masses so hostile, so inflamed, there is reason to fear tumults, conflicts, bloodshed. What is it which has prevented these sad results in the past, in the days of your weakness? Your forbearance; your unwillingness to meet force by force. Had you adopted the means of defence which any other party, so persecuted, would have chosen, our streets might again and again have flowed with blood. Society might have been shaken by the conflict. If, now, in your strength, you take the sword, and repay blow with blow, what is not to be feared? It is one of the objections to great associations, that they accumulate a power which, in seasons of excitement and exasperation, threatens public commotions, and which may even turn our country into a field of battle. I say, then, that if you choose to organize so vast a force for a cause which awakens fierce passions, you must adopt 'the peace principle' as your inviolable rule. You must trust in the laws, and in the moral sympathies of the community. You must try the power of suffering for truth. The first Christians tried this among communities more ferocious than our own. You have yourselves tried it, and through it have made rapid progress. To desert it might be to plunge the country into fearful contests, and to rob your cause of all its sanctity.

"I proceed to another consideration. The South has denounced you as incendiaries; has predicted, from your associated efforts, insurrection and massacre within its borders. And what has been the reply which you and your friends have made? You and they have pointed to the prevalence of the peace principle in your ranks, as a security against such effects. You have said, that you shrunk from the assertion of rights by physical force; that, could you approach the slave, you should teach him patience under wrongs, and should spare no effort to warn him against bloody and violent means of redress. What becomes of this defence, if you begin to wield the sword? Deeply moved as you are by the injuries of the slave, can you be expected to preach to him submission and peace, if you yourselves shall have caught the spirit of war, the scent of blood? Will the South have no cause of alarm, when the enemies of its 'domestic institutions' shall have sprung up from unresisting sufferers into warriors? Will not your foes at the North be armed with new weapons for your ruin? To me it seems, that, if you choose to array your force under the standard of a vast organization, you are bound to give a pledge to the country that you will not violate its peace. Hitherto I have appealed confidently to your pacific principles as securities against all wrongs. I have seen with indignation the violence of cowardly and unprincipled men directed against an unresisting band. I trust that your friends will never have cause to grow faint in your defence. I trust that the tragedy of Alton will draw from you new assurances of your trust in God, in the power of truth, and in the moral sympathies of a Christian people.

"I have now accomplished the chief end which I proposed to myself in this communication. But the same spirit which has suggested the preceding remarks induces me to glance at other topics. This spirit is a most friendly one, a sincere desire for your purity and success.

"I have more than once, as you well know, lamented the disposition of some, perhaps many, of your members, to adopt violent forms of speech. In reply to this complaint, it has been said, that the people, to be awakened, must be spoken to with strength; that soft whispers will not break their lethargy; that nothing but thunder can startle a community, steeped in selfish unconcern, to the wrongs of their neighbour. What can be done, it is asked, without strong language? I grant that great moral convictions ought to be given out with energy, and that the zeal which exaggerates them may be forgiven. But exaggerations in regard to *persons* are not to be so readily forgiven. We may use an hyperbole in stating a truth. We must not be hyperbolical in setting forth the wrong-doing of our neighbour. As an example of the unjust severity which I blame, it may be stated, that some among you have been accustomed to denounce slaveholders as 'robbers and man-stealers.' Now robbery and stealing are words of plain signification. They imply that a man takes *consciously* and *with knowledge* what belongs to another. To steal is to seize privily, to rob is to seize by force, the *acknowledged* property of one's neighbour. Now is the slaveholder to be charged with these crimes? Does he *know* that the slave he holds is not his own? On the contrary, is there any part of his property to which he thinks himself to have a stronger right? I grant that the delusion is a monstrous one. I repel with horror the claim of ownership of a human being. I can as easily think of owning an angel as of owning a man. But do we not know that there are men at the North, who, regarding the statute-book as of equal authority with the Sermon on the Mount, and looking on legal as synonymous with moral right, believe that the civil law can create property in a man as easily as in a brute, and who, were they consistent, would think themselves authorized to put their parents under the lash, should the legislature decree, that, at a certain age, the parent should become the slave of the child? Is it wonderful, then, that men, brought up in sight of enslaved human beings, in the habit of treating them as chattels, and amidst laws, religious teachings, and a great variety of institutions, which recognize this horrible claim, should seriously think themselves the owners of their fellow-creatures? . . . . .

"It is said, that, by such allowances to the master, I have weakened the power of what I have written against slavery; that I have furnished a pillow for the conscience of the slaveholder. But truth is truth, and we must never wink it out of sight for the sake of effect. God needs not the help of our sophistry or exaggeration. For the sake of awakening sensibility, we must not, in our descriptions, add the weight of a feather to the sufferings of the slave, or the faintest shade to the guilt of the master. Slavery, indeed, regarded as a violation of man's most sacred rights, should always be spoken of by us with the deepest abhorrence; and we ought not to conceal our fear, that, among those who vindicate it, in this free and Christian land, there must be many who wilfully shut their eyes on its wrongs, who are victims of a voluntary blindness, as criminal as known and chosen transgression. Let us speak the truth and the whole truth, and speak it in the language of strong conviction. But let neither policy nor passion carry us beyond the truth. Let a severe principle of duty, stronger than excitement, watch and preside over all our utterance. . . . . .

"I find in your writings a mode of excusing your severity of language, which I think unsound. You justify yourselves by the strong rebukes uttered by Jesus Christ. But Christ must be followed cautiously here. Was he not a prophet? Was he not guided by a wisdom granted to him alone? Had he not an insight into the hearts and characters of men, which gave a certainty to his severer judgments? Shall the Christian speak with the authority of his Lord? Nor is this all. Jesus could reprove severely, without the danger which besets all human reproof. His whole spirit was love. There was not a prejudice or passion in his breast, to darken or distort his judgment. He *could* not err on the side of harshness. Are *we* so secured? Jesus could say of himself, — 'I am meek and lowly in heart.' So unbounded was his generosity and candor, that, in the agonies of death, he prayed for the enemies who had nailed him to the cross, and urged in their behalf the only extenuation which their crime would admit. Such a being might safely trust himself to his most excited feelings. His consciousness of perfect love to his worst foes assured him against injustice. How different was rebuke from the lips of Jesus from that which breaks from ours! Had we been present when he said, — 'Alas for you! Pharisees, hypocrites!' we should have heard tones which breathed the purest philanthropy. We should have seen a countenance on which the indwelling divinity had impressed a celestial love. How different were these rebukes from the harsh tones and hard looks of man! Christ's denunciations had for their groundwork, if I may so speak, a character of perfect benignity, sweetness, forgiveness; and they were in harmony with this. They were scattered through a life which was spent in spreading blessings with the munificence of a God. You justify your severity by Christ's. Let your spirit be as gentle, your lives as beneficent, as his, and I will promise to be contented with your severest rebukes.

"Having expressed my disapprobation and fears, I feel that it is right to close this letter with expressing the deep interest I feel in you, not as an association, but as men pledged to the use of all lawful means for the subversion of slavery. There is but one test by which individuals or parties can be judged, and that is the *principles* from which they act, and which they are pledged to support. No matter how many able men a party may number in its ranks;

unless pledged to *great principles*, it must pass away, and its leaders sink into oblivion. There are two great principles to which you are devoted, and for which I have always honored you. The first is, the freedom of the press. This you have not only vindicated with your lips and pens, but you have asserted it amidst persecutions. The right of a man to publish his convictions on subjects of deepest concern to society and humanity, this you have held fast when most men would have shrunk from it. This practical assertion of a great principle I hold to be worth more than the most eloquent professions of it in public meetings, or than all the vindications of it in the closet. I have thanked you, and thank you again, in the name of liberty, for this good service which you have rendered her. I know of none to whom her debt is greater. There was a time when the freedom of the press needed no defenders in our land, for it was strong in the love of the people. It was recognized as the pervading life, the conservative power, of our institutions. A voice raised against it would have been pronounced moral treason. We clung to it as an immutable principle, as a universal and inalienable right. We received it as an intuitive truth, as no more to be questioned than a law of nature. But 'the times are changed, and we change with them.' Are there no signs, is there nothing to make us fear, that the freedom of speech and the press, regarded as a *right* and a *principle*, is dying out of the hearts of this people? It is not a sufficient answer to say that the vast majority speak and publish their thoughts without danger. The question is, whether this freedom is distinctly and practically recognized as *every man's right.* Unless it stands on this ground, it is little more than a name; it has no permanent life. To refuse it to a minority, however small, is to loosen every man's hold of it, to violate its sacredness, to break up its foundation. A despotism, too strong for fear, may, through its very strength, allow to the mass great liberty of utterance ; but in conceding it as a privilege, and not *as a right*, and by withholding it at pleasure from offensive individuals, the despot betrays himself as truly as if he had put a seal on every man's lips. That state must not call itself free, in which any party, however small, cannot safely speak its mind ; in which any party is exposed to violence for the exercise of a universal right ; in which the laws, made to protect all, cannot be sustained against brute force. The freedom of speech and the press seems now to be sharing the lot of all great principles. History shows us, that all great principles, however ardently espoused for a time, have a tendency to fade into traditions, to degenerate into a hollow cant, to become words of little import, and to remain for declamation, when their vital power is gone. At such a period, every good citizen is called to do what in him lies to restore their life and power. To some, it may be a disheartening thought, that the battle of liberty is never to end, that its first principles must be established anew, on the very spots where they seemed immovably fixed. But it is the law of our being, that no true good can be made sure without struggle ; and it should cheer us to think that to struggle for the right is the noblest use of our powers and the only means of happiness and perfection.

" Another ground of my strong interest in your body is, that you are pledged to another principle, far broader than the freedom of the press, and on which this and all other rights repose. You start from the sublimest truth. You oppose slavery, not from political or worldly considerations. You take your stand on the unutterable worth of every human being, and on his inalienable rights as a rational, moral, and immortal child of God. Here is your strength. Unlike the political parties which agitate the country, you have a *principle*, and the grandest which can unite a body of men. That you fully comprehend it, or are always faithful to it, cannot be affirmed; but you have it, and it is cause of joy to see men seizing it even in an imperfect form. All slavery, all oppressive institutions, all social abuses, spring from or involve contempt of human nature. The tyrant does not know *who* it is whom he tramples in the dust. You have caught a glimpse of the truth. The inappreciable worth of every human being, and the derivation of his rights, not from paper constitutions and human laws, but from his spiritual and immortal nature, from his affinity with God,—these are the truths which are to renovate society, by the light of which our present civilization will one day be seen to bear many an impress of barbarism, and by the power of which a real brotherhood will more and more unite the now divided and struggling family of man. My great interest in you lies in your assertion of these truths. The liberation of three millions of slaves is, indeed, a noble object; but a greater work is the diffusion of principles, by which every yoke is to be broken, every government to be regenerated, and a liberty more precious than civil or political is to be secured to the world. I know with what indifference the doctrine of the infinite worth of every human being, be his rank or color what it may, is listened to by multitudes. But it is not less true because men of narrow and earthly minds cannot comprehend it. It is written in blood on the cross of Christ. He taught it when he ascended and carried our nature to heaven. It is confirmed by all the inquisitions of philosophy into the soul, by the progress of the human intellect, by the affections of the human heart, by man's intercourse with God, by his sacrifices for his fellow-creatures. I am not discouraged by the fact, that this great truth has been espoused most earnestly by a party which numbers in its ranks few great names. The prosperous and distinguished of this world, given as they generally are to epicurean self-indulgence and to vain show, are among the last to comprehend the worth of a human being, to penetrate into the evils of society, or to impart to it a fresh impulse. The less prosperous classes furnish the world with its reformers and martyrs. These, however, from imperfect culture, are apt to narrow themselves to one idea, to fasten their eyes on a single evil, to lose the balance of their minds, to kindle with a feverish enthusiasm. Let such remember, that no man should take on himself the office of a reformer, whose zeal in a particular cause is not tempered by extensive sympathies and universal love. This is a high standard, but not too high for men who have started from the great principle of your association. They who found their efforts against oppression on *every* man's near relation to God, on every man's participation of a moral and immortal nature, cannot, without singular inconsistency, grow fierce against the many in their zeal for a few. From a body founded on such a principle ought to come forth more enlightened friends of the race, more enlarged philanthropists, than have yet been trained. Guard from dishonor the divine truth which you have espoused as your creed and your rule. Show forth its energy in what you do and suffer. Show forth its celestial purity in your freedom from unworthy passions. Prove it to be from God, by serene trust in his providence, by fearless obedience to his will, by imitating his impartial justice and his universal love.

"I now close this long letter. I have spoken the more freely, because I shall probably be prevented, by various and pressing objects, from communicating with you again. In your great and holy purpose, you have my sympathies and best wishes. I implore for you the guidance and blessing of God. Very sincerely, your friend."

This frank letter called forth from the sternly upright editor of the Liberator the equally frank criticism, that, although the "motives of its author" were "pure, benevolent, commendable," and although "its spirit was complacent and amicable, its purpose unquestionably good, its style elaborate and transpicuous," yet that, as a whole, it was "defective in principle, false in its charity, and inconsistent in its reasoning." In reference to this very freely expressed dissatisfaction of the Abolitionists, Dr. Channing thus wrote to two friends.

"*December*, 1837.[*] As to my letter to the Abolitionists, I rested on the incongruity of a work of philanthropy and bloodshed. I did *not* take the ground of expediency, but intended to lay down a principle. I felt, that, after having had so much to do with the Abolitionists, I owed it to truth and myself to show where I agreed and where I disagreed with them."

"*December*, 1837.[†] I should not send you the little pamphlet in this envelope, did I not know your interest in the cause and the individuals treated of in it. It is the misfortune of my position to satisfy no party; but of that I ought not to think. Nothing but a sense of duty, which I could not escape, would have led me to prepare this article."

In the well-known article entitled "The Martyr Age of the United States of America,"[‡] Miss Martineau thus narrates an occurrence, of which she was probably a witness, and which it may be well here to record, as illustrating Dr. Channing's relations with the Abolitionists. It happened at the time when the board of managers of the Massachusetts Antislavery Society had appointed a committee to confer with a committee of the legislature in relation to the subject of penal enactments against Abolition societies and Abolition presses, which, as we have seen, some of the Southern States had demanded. "While the committee were, with ostentatious negligence, keeping the Abolitionists waiting, the Senate Chamber presented an interesting spectacle. The contemptuous committee, dawdling about some immaterial business, were lolling over a table. . . . . . The Abolitionists, to whom this business was a prelude to life or death, were earnestly consulting in groups, — at the farther end of the chamber, Garrison and another, standing head to head, — somewhat nearer, Dr. Follen, looking German all over, and a deeper earnestness than usual overspreading his serene and meditative countenance ; and in consultation with him Mr. Loring, looking only too frail in form, but with a face radiant with inward light. There were May and Goodell and Sewall and several more, and many an anxious wife or sister or friend looking down from the gallery. During the suspense, the door opened, and Dr. Channing entered, — one of the last people that could, on that wintry afternoon, have been expected. He stood for a few moments muffled in cloak and shawl-handkerchief, then walked the whole length of the room, and was immediately seen shaking hands with Mr. Garrison. He afterwards explained, that he was not, at the moment, certain that it was Mr. Garrison, but that he was not the less happy to have shaken hands with him. A murmur ran through the gallery, and a smile went round the chamber. Mrs. Chapman whispered to her next neighbour, — 'Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.' Dr. Channing had censured the Abolitionists in his pamphlet on Slavery. Mr. Garrison in the Liberator had rejected the censure, and here they were, shaking hands in the Senate Chamber. It was presently found that a pressure of numbers compelled an adjournment to the larger House of Representatives. There Dr. Channing sat behind the speakers, handing them notes, and most obviously affording them his countenance, so as to be thenceforth considered by the world an accession to their principles, though not to their organized body."

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[*] To Dr. Charles Follen. [†] To Miss H. Martineau.

[‡] London and Westminster Review, Dec., 1838.

Some painful facts in relation to the mode in which the Antislavery movement was for many years regarded by leading persons in the Federal Street Society must here be stated, as yet further proving Dr. Channing's readiness to coöperate with the Abolitionists, so far as his judgment and conscience would permit. In "Right and Wrong in Boston, 1835," Mrs. Chapman, speaking of the Boston Female Antislavery Society, says, — "Having notified it" — an address by George Thompson, explanatory of the objects of Antislavery associations — "in the Rev. Dr. Channing's church, where a notice of our meetings has never been refused a reading." This was true of the earliest years of the Antislavery movement, and would have been true always, had Dr. Channing's wishes been followed. It was his desire, not only that notices of the Antislavery societies should be freely read in the Federal Street pulpit, but that the meeting-house itself should be opened for their use. In both respects he was overruled by the decision of the Federal Street congregation. The standing committee placed a strict embargo upon all notices of a doubtful character, so that very few of Antislavery meetings ever reached the officiating minister. And in April, 1837, Dr. Channing received a negative answer to the following note.

"*To the Standing Committee of Federal Street Church.*

"GENTLEMEN, — The inclosed letter" — an application by Francis Jackson, Esq., for the use of the church for the Anniversary Meeting of the New England Antislavery Society — "was sent to me this morning. I wrote in reply, that it would be very agreeable to me that our church should be used for the purpose expressed in the letter; but that it was the custom with us for the committee of the society to receive and decide on such applications, and that I would accordingly lay the subject before them, which I now do. Very truly, your friend."

It was entirely against his will that, under these circumstances, the Federal Street meeting-house was obtained from the committee for the purpose of a lecture, by the disingenuous action of an agent of the Colonization Society. But a far more bitter disappointment followed. Nothing in all his intercourse with his people, nothing in his whole Antislavery experience, caused him so much pain as a refusal of the use of the church to the Massachusetts Antislavery Society, on the sad occasion when all true-hearted persons were called to mourn the awful death of Charles Follen, and when the Rev. S. J. May had prepared a discourse in commemoration of the rare virtues of that heroic and honored man. It was not only the insult to the memory of a beloved friend that grieved him, — though this could not but shock his quick and delicate feelings; still less was it the disregard, under such touching circumstances, of his well-known wishes, that wounded him most deeply; but this manifestation of a want of high sentiment in the congregation to which, for so many years, he had officiated as pastor, made him question the usefulness of his whole ministry. To what end had he poured out his soul, if such conduct was a practical embodiment of the principles and precepts which he had so earnestly inculcated? This event brought home to his heart the conviction, that the need was very urgent of a thorough application of the Christian law of love to all existing social relations.

The following letters will complete the view of Dr. Channing's connection with the Antislavery movement.

"*Newport*, August 2, 1838.* Yesterday we rode to Fall River, to attend a meeting in acknowledgment of the great goodness of God in giving freedom to eight hundred thousand fellow-creatures in the West Indies. What a glorious triumph of Christianity! — for this work has been accomplished by the spirit of justice and benevolence which Christianity has spread abroad. And can this spirit stop? Has it done its work? Has it more than begun its work? I feel a more cheering hope than ever for my race. Never had I so little alarm. In truth, all alarm seems to have left me. I confide in truth, and God, and human nature more than ever, and want nothing but strength to enter with new life on my labors."

"*Boston*, February 26, 1840. Slavery never seemed to me a more important subject. I am sorry that —— thinks so highly of political action on the subject. My belief is, that the cause would have gone on steadily, surely, had not political action been resorted to, — had the friends of the cause labored to attract to it the thinking, virtuous, patriotic, by unremitting appeals to the reason and conscience."

"*Newport*, September 22, 1840.† I will tell you what I have been doing, though I wish nothing said of it, as I have not yet made up my mind to publish. Mr. Gurney's letter on West India emancipation interested me so much, that I could not help throwing my thoughts on paper. I have nearly completed a pamphlet, in which I have given my thoughts on several points which I have not touched before. One thing which makes me doubt whether it will be published is the absorption of the public mind on the present political questions. Poor as these are, they throw all others into the background. I doubt whether a bookseller will incline to the pamphlet, especially as the subject is so unpopular. You shall know the result. By the way, — I was sorry to see Mr. Gurney treated so roughly in the Liberator. Here is a man who has rendered important service to the Antislavery cause, and, because he does not choose to keep company with our Abolitionists, he must be cast out. Where should I be, or what would be the tone of my conversation and writing and feelings, if I were to undertake to rate all who have shunned me for my various unpopular principles? Am I to set down as bad or of little worth all who have misinterpreted me, or detected what is really imperfect? This intolerance shocks and pains me, because it has done infinite harm to the Antislavery cause. It lies at the bottom of the schism in the Antislavery ranks, and is now wasting the strength of the party in mutual reproaches. We must learn to let our *friends*, as well as enemies, differ from us, and not expect them to move a step with us beyond what their private convictions warrant."

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* To Joseph Tuckerman, D. D.

† To Mrs. Eliza L. Follen.

"*October* 6, 1840.* I have no hostility to this society, if it will confine itself to its legitimate objects. The chief of these I understand to be the civilizing and Christianizing of Africa, and the suppression of the slave trade. How far a colony made up of such materials as you send may answer these ends, some will question. But if any have faith in it, I say, let them try it, and may God bless their benevolent efforts. My objection to the society is, that it has exerted an influence, and a very disastrous one, beyond its proper limits. I fear that it has done more to depress and corrupt the moral sentiments of the community on the subject of Emancipation, than all other things.

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* To Mr. Hazard, Vaucluse, R. I.

"But the past is past. I desire a better future. You, as a friend of freedom and humanity, cannot knowingly, I am sure, give aid to doctrines and efforts which go to quiet the conscience of the slaveholder and to crush the hope of the slave. Why is it necessary that Colonization and Emancipation should come into collision? Why may not good men favor both? Why cannot the children of Africa on both sides of the ocean be raised at the same moment to the rights and dignity of man? Good men will choose, among various objects of humanity, to which they will devote themselves. But why quarrel with and obstruct others? Whoever places himself in the way of Emancipation I must regard as acting the part of the enemy of his race, and it is poor comfort to me that he does this in order to produce another good. In these views I doubt not that I have your sympathy, and what I desire is, that you would spare no effort to bring the operations of the Colonization Society into harmony with them. I should rejoice to see this institution accomplishing its ends in Africa; but I cannot expect to see it doing good abroad, if it shall, in any way, countenance oppression at home. Let its munificent patrons say with decision, that it must not, directly or indirectly, obstruct the cause of emancipation at home, and I believe the difficulty will end. Is the time never to come when good men will pursue their various paths in peace?"

"*Boston*, February 27, 1841.* Your approbation of my writing is encouraging to me; and I need the more some cheering words from abroad, because I hear not many at home. I began to write on slavery in consequence of the almost universal insensibility on the subject around me. There are more signs of life now; but a cause which has to make its way against avarice, commercial interests, conservative fears, and the selfish views of politicians, cannot triumph in a day. I have reason to think that I have done some good. At any rate, I have written under that feeling of necessity which Paul felt, when he said, 'Woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel.' I have obeyed a divine monition, and cannot have labored in vain. Do not think, from these remarks, that I attach much importance to these labors; I should not have spoken of them, had not you expressed so kindly an interest in them."

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* To J. Blanco White.

"*April* 1, 1841.* I thank you for 'The Hour and the Man.' You have given a magnificent picture of Toussaint; and, in truth, I know not where the heroic character is more grandly conceived. May you live to render many such services to humanity!"

"*Newport*, June 21, 1841. I have had a very pleasant visit southward, — have seen more of society and the country, and experienced much kindness. The Abolitionists have given me a cordial welcome, and it delights me to see how a great common object establishes in an hour a confidence and friendship which years are sometimes necessary to produce. My 'Emancipation' has been spread widely, and I believe done much good. It has been put into the hands of men of influence. It is just stereotyped, and I know not how many thousands are to be sent forth. A Quaker from England brought me a letter from the venerable Clarkson, with a lock of his hair, in testimony of his pleasure in the work. I cannot tell you the hospitalities which my Abolition labors win for me, nor was I aware of the extent of their influence. I ought certainly to be grateful for them. The opposition they have excited has done me great good, has been a very precious part of the experience of my life, and now the blessings of success are added to the higher blessing of suffering for the truth. I do not wear as yet a crown of martyrdom. I hope I have not declined it by dishonorable compliance."

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* To Miss Harriet Martineau.

"*August* 28, 1841.* In regard to slavery, I cannot doubt that there is a good work going on in the country; but it seems as if this republic were to be the stronghold of the nefarious institution. The South is very much cut off from the influences of the civilized world, and it contains a dense mass of ignorance, such as foreigners little understand. The slaveholders form a small proportion to the whole white population, but, having the wealth and education, they rule. This unnatural state of things cannot continue."

"*Newport*, August, 1841. The only important question before Congress is, whether Mr. Everett's nomination shall be confirmed. The question of a bank is of no moment, but the rejection of Mr. Everett on account of his Abolitionism would shake New England. I rejoice to find that there is a degree of manly spirit among us. I feared that we should acquiesce in this, as in every thing else; but we sleep only, we are not dead."

"*Newport*, September 16, 1841. Mr. Everett's nomination is approved. Perhaps this is best; and yet a rejection would not have been without its use. There seems to be no commanding man from the North in Congress except Mr. Adams, who has been silent very much this session. Why is it that there is so little loftiness in us? Must we be weak and dumb until we take the ground of *principle*? The South will always beat us in *passion*, and the North will cower before it till we catch the inspiration of some great truths. A calculating people will always succumb to a fiery one."

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* To George Combe, Esq.

"*Newport, R. I.*, September 16, 1841.* You think Abolition has prejudiced the Antislavery cause. On this subject I receive the most contradictory statements and opinions. After the Southampton insurrection, there seemed to be an outbreak of Antislavery feeling in the Virginia legislature. . . . . .

"Opinions, feelings, uttered under excitement, are often no indications of the settled character and purpose. I had a long conversation with a slaveholder yesterday, who said to me, with much candor, 'It is a question of *property*, and a man loves property more than *life*.' Such things have led me to believe, that, under a professed willingness to give up slavery, and amidst real feelings of its evils, there was and is a rooted purpose of holding it fast, and that Abolitionism has only brought out the true and almost universal state of mind. For a time I found much fault with the Abolitionists for their violence, but have been more and more inclined to believe that the cause of irritation was not in the *manner*, but in the *matter*, the *essence*, of Abolitionism.

"Since last writing you, I have seen additional extracts from the letters of the gentleman at the South whose opinions I formerly gave. He writes chiefly about East Tennessee and West North Carolina. Of the former he says,— 'Slavery is unpopular there, and as great a proportion of the free men would vote it down as in Connecticut.' He gives the opinion of an intelligent member of the North Carolina legislature, who says 'that a majority of the people of that State are in favor of abolishing slavery.' Have you means of judging of these statements? He ascribed the anti-Abolition excitement to 'political purposes.' In accordance with this, a very intelligent and virtuous lawyer from the South, now established in the West, told a friend of mine that the leading politicians of the South would smile together at the use they were making of Abolition; and the slaveholder with whom I conversed yesterday, from South Carolina, assured me that the people there had not the *least fear* from the slave population, and that he thought himself safer than if he lived in Philadelphia. Does the alarm seem to you assumed among the intelligent, or real? I doubt not it is real among the ignorant. You see I have given you a task for which the blame must fall on your own kindness, if anywhere."

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* To Mr. ———, Virginia.

"*Boston*, March 4, 1842. I am anxious to express to you as soon as I may the delight which your letter gave me. You have been living for something, and have a satisfaction granted to few friends of the slave, that of seeing with your own eyes the fruits of your labors. When you see Mr. ——, do give him my thanks for his noble efforts. He has brought all the friends of humanity into his debt, not only by the immediate result, but by giving hope and courage to others embarked in the same cause. I confess, when you talked with me last summer on this matter, I had many fears for the torrent of prejudice and passion you had to encounter, though I said not a word to dishearten you. You and Mr. —— teach us never to despair. It is plain from your letter, that you have found more sympathy among slaveholders than could have been expected, and this is a useful lesson. The enemies of slavery have been too apt to give all their sympathies to the slave, and to deny all human feeling to the master. I have never fallen into this error, and I owe my escape from it in part to the deep impression made on my mind for many years by the strange incongruities of human character, — now by the odd mixture of littleness and greatness in the same individual, now by the horrible union of ferocious impulses and frantic deeds with an openness to good feelings. Perhaps nothing in history has struck me more than the crimes of the good, so that, with my profound conviction of the criminality of slavery, I have found no difficulty in maintaining kindness and even respect towards the wrongdoer. Such help we derive from a great truth. You speak of your 'business relations' as having aided you in this good work, and as seeming to you 'less objectless' than formerly. You have seized, I think, on one of the most important views of business. The connection it establishes with our fellow-creatures may be turned to good in a thousand ways. Unhappily, the young start with the maxim, that there is no friendship in trade, and all pecuniary relations become so tainted by selfishness, that mutual distrust is much more frequently the result than mutual aid.

" Let me ask if Mr. ——'s exertions and gain in this particular case of oppression may not open the way to something more, and perhaps on a larger scale. Are there no other injuries inflicted on the colored people, under forms of law, to which the people may be waked up? Can nothing like a loose, informal association be formed among the humane for the protection of this exposed class? The presentment of the grand jury shows that there is a true spirit of justice and humanity in ——. Can it not receive a right direction, and be stimulated to higher activity? Men who have done one righteous deed are better prepared for another. We catch virtue from ourselves as well as from others. The present Temperance movement began among the intemperate. Cannot an Antislavery movement begin among slaveholders? This would not much surprise me. There is a good deal of inward work, silent thought, in our country, and it breaks out in unexpected forms. I trust that Providence is training up in secret friends of justice and humanity in the most unpromising regions."

"*August* 10, 1842. Finding the people around me disposed to forget the slave, I prepared an address for the First of August, which has gone to the press. I feel that such efforts bring me before the public as a *pamphleteer*, not a very exalted name in literature. But this is the readiest way to the public mind, and I could not decline the task without self-reproach."

"*September*, 1842.* My First of August address was written under the inspiration of the mountains, which you know are the 'holy land' of liberty. I did not think of making any serious effort, but insensibly it grew under my hands, till it spread over pages enough to require an hour and a half for the delivery. I had only strength to speak an hour and ten or fifteen minutes. I do not know that I ever spoke with more effect. I felt that I had found my way to the hearts of my hearers. What the intrinsic, permanent merits of the address are, I cannot say. Its popularity is no proof of any particular merit. It is in the press."

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* To Mrs. E. L. Follen.

CHAPTER V.

POLITICS.

From the days when, as a boy, he stood amid the assembled citizens of Rhode Island, and heard his father's persuasive voice urging the adoption of the Federal Constitution, onward through every year of widening experience and growing power, Dr. Channing's interest had deepened in the changes by which human governments are becoming moulded after patterns of divine order. Piety and charity, breathed in from Christianity, only enlarged, while they purified, his love of civil freedom. Politics were to him the body of religion. And his ever-expanding hope and purpose was to aid in diffusing that spirit of love, whereby law and liberty will become one, and societies on earth be made to image in justice and in joy the societies of heaven.

In a letter suggested by reading the " Great Song " of Charles Follen,* Dr. Channing has very beautifully sketched the process, which he had seen in his friend, and was conscious of in himself, whereby youth's glowing zeal is transformed into the steel-like firmness of manhood, in the truly disinterested political reformer. The extract will best introduce his views of politics in later years.

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* Life of Charles Follen, p. 593.

"They who have felt in their youth the enthusiasm of freedom, whose spirits have been stirred within them by the sight of oppression, will easily interpret the language of this song, written at the age of seventeen. They will see in its tone of vehement indignation nothing cruel or unfeeling, but the natural utterance of intense, all-sacrificing devotion to the rights, dignity, and happiness of mankind. The fiery soul of youth does not count its words, nor does it weigh cautiously the consequences of acts to which it is prompted by generous impulse. In its inexperience and earnestness, it is impatient of slow means of redress, and hopes to level the fabric of despotism, the work of ages, with a blow. Courageous, heroic, sympathizing with the martyr of liberty in all ages, it burns to seize the avenging sword, and almost envies those who have redeemed oppressed nations by their blood. Such is the picture of the noblest and most generous natures in youth, and we should grievously misconstrue them, were we to see in their defying tones the signs of ferocity. A manhood of the sweetest, serenest virtue often follows a youth of irrepressible enthusiasm. The most interesting characters, indeed, are those in which the uncalculating, disinterested ardor of early life is tempered with the wisdom of years."

Few men have lived more profoundly moved by patriotism — if that much abused word may be redeemed to signify a devotedness to the essential principles and real prosperity of a people — than Dr. Channing. With his whole soul he longed to realize that ideal of a "Christian Commonwealth," which heralded our forefathers to this virgin land. No storms, no frosts, could dim the beacon-fire of this great hope. Yet how expansive was this patriotism may be seen from the following extracts.

1831. "A nation, blessed as we are with free institutions, should feel that it holds these not for itself only, but for mankind, and that all oppressive establishments must fall before their influence, if it will but give proof of their tendency and power to exalt a people in spirit, in virtue, and in condition. In truth, this close connection of different communities should lead us as individuals, as well as in our associated character, to interest ourselves in the cause of humanity through the whole earth. The present is an age of great movements, of great perils, and still of glorious prospects, and one in which there is a power of sympathy, as well as means of coöperation and extensive agency, never known before. In such an age, we should not shut up ourselves in ourselves, or look on the struggles of nations with a vain curiosity, but should watch the changes of the world with profound concern, and respond to great principles, and cheer philanthropic efforts, wherever manifested. We should feel, I think, that the time is approaching in which Christian philanthropy is to act a new part on the theatre of human affairs, is to unite men of different countries in the same great work of rolling away abuses, of staying wide-spread evils, vindicating private rights, establishing public peace, and exalting the condition of the ignorant. We should do what we can to hasten on this era. Our children should be educated on more generous principles, and taught to make new sacrifices to the cause of their fellow-creatures. Every age teaches its own lesson. The lesson of this age is that of sympathy with the suffering, and of devotion to the progress of the whole human race."

His conviction of the grand privileges and duties of the United States made Dr. Channing indignant at the skepticism which he found but too prevalent in regard to the success of free institutions. This feeling manifests itself in a sermon preached to his people soon after the destruction of the convent on Mount Benedict.

October, 1834. "With the mob itself I have nothing to do. On the feelings of the community which excited it, or which have grown out of it, and which seem to me reprehensible, I shall offer a few remarks.

"Let me begin with observing, that the tone of alarm and despair produced by this outrage, and in which, as a community, we are very prone to indulge in all critical seasons, seems to me neither just nor wise. Multitudes among us on that occasion spoke, as they have too often spoken, as if society were shaken to its foundations, all its joints loosened, all its fixtures about to be swept away. Such alarms create the danger which they imagine. The foundation of a free community is the moral confidence of its members in one another. Impair this, and society is indeed convulsed. Inspire a people with mutual distrust, and you fit them for chains. What is the strength of a despotism? It is the want of moral confidence in a people. Why does one will subjugate millions? Because those millions have no mutual respect or trust as a basis of joint action. The individual on whose heart the thought of freedom has dawned dares not breathe it into his neighbour's ear, lest that neighbour should prove a spy. He has around him cowards or sycophants, men sold to selfishness and meanness, and sinks into despair. Breathe through this mass one generous sentiment which should bind them together, and despotism would fall as by an earthquake.

"The old enthusiasm of liberty seems to be dying among us. The spirit of aristocracy, which always grows with the growth of population and wealth, and still more, the crimes and errors which have dishonored the cause of constitutional freedom in both continents, have chilled the old republican ardor. The faith of many in the capacity of men for self-government is shaken. Little interest is felt in the struggles of other nations for emancipation from old abuses, and for securing better institutions. This is not to be wondered at, but it is much to be deplored. Despair of improvement is the symptom of spiritual death. Freedom is departing when faith in it is lost. The dangers of innovation, and the liableness of liberty to abuse, do, indeed, teach and enjoin great caution and sobriety in the adoption of plans for the advancement of society; but they ought not to repress or weaken our sense of justice, our sympathy with the oppressed, our earnest desire to break every chain, and our trust in patient, upright efforts in the cause of human nature. . . . . .

"Let us, then, trust in one another to the very limit of truth. Men grow more trustworthy by mutual confidence. We are unwise and unjust to ourselves in speaking, as we are apt to do, of our free government as a rope of sand, as a baseless, rotten fabric, which any storm may sweep away. We make it insecure by this distrust of its stability. Undoubtedly it has its dangers, for liberty of every kind is perilous; but if ever a nation had the means of giving permanence to freedom, it is the United States, and ours will be the crime if it perish in our hands.

"A mob is, indeed, to be regarded with horror and detestation, just as we regard a murderer. But when a man is murdered, we do not think that butchery is to become the order of the day; nor when a mob breaks out, ought we to feel as if all the authority of law, all social order, were on the brink of ruin. Mobs springing from the blind prejudices or passions of individuals may do great harm, and ought to be provided against more efficiently; but these will never dissolve our government, or essentially impair public security. Mobs may, indeed, become instruments of ruin, but not such as we have lately witnessed. I refer to mobs connected with great parties, protected by them, and used by them as instruments. Here is a peril which cannot be set before us in too strong a light. Even here, however, the danger will not be in the mob, but in the spirit of party, which will vindicate, organize, and wield it. The great danger of our country does not lie in occasional outbreakings of the ignorant and depraved part of the community, but in the spirit of party, inflaming and poisoning all breasts with hatred, propagating falsehood till no man can know the truth, legalizing fraud, intrigue, and corruption, subverting moral confidence, seeking strength in tumults, and converting elections into mobs. If this state of madness should be produced in the community, then, indeed, and then only, the shout of mobs will be the knell of freedom."

From these general remarks, the preacher passes on to a particular consideration of the mob at Charlestown. It will be seen how utterly opposed he was in principle and feeling to the blind prejudices which prompted that outrage; and an inference may be drawn as to the tone in which he would have spoken of "Native Americanism," had he been living, although he was fully aware of the evils incident to promiscuous suffrage.

"The feelings excited by that event were in general just and honorable to us as a community. But I understand one feeling has been called out which deserves severe reprobation, and which, I fear, has not been rebuked as it deserves. It is said, that not a few among us are, in a measure, reconciled to the outrage, because of its bearing on an unpopular sect, — because it broke down one of the fortresses of Popery; though this is the very circumstance which ought to awaken against it peculiar indignation. It is said that language like the following is not very uncommon: — 'The mob was a bad thing, but it did some good. It destroyed the convent, that hateful monument of Romanism.' This language is as unworthy as it is false, and deserves as severe rebuke as the mob itself. *No good* has been done, and the evil was the very one which ought most to humble us as a people. Our highest distinction as a community is the spirit of religious freedom. This city has been the metropolis of religious liberty to the whole earth, and that the persecution of the Dark Ages should be revived here is cause of unutterable shame. It is no good that a convent has been burnt. Better that twenty convents should rise than that one should be suppressed by brute force.

"It is hoped by many that Catholicism has thus received a check. I trust it has not. Better that it should triumph than be *thus* checked. Experience has shown that persecution strengthens religious sects. May this experience never fail. May persecutors learn, by invariable disappointment, that they are working ruin to themselves and their cause by their bloody instruments, — that their weapons are sure to recoil on themselves. In what lies the worst evil of Popery? Not in its doctrines, — in transubstantiation, purgatory, or the invocation of saints. Many who have held these errors have been the excellent of the earth, unsurpassed in genius, philanthropy, and piety. It is the insolent, intolerant pretension to infallibility, — to the distinction of being the only true and apostolic church, — to the authority of denouncing heresy, — which has made Popery the scourge and curse of Christendom. It is the war which this church has waged against the rights of conscience, against the free worship of God, which has branded her with indelible infamy. And do we who call ourselves Protestants, who have inscribed religious freedom on our banner, — do we begin to borrow the sword and fire of persecuting Rome? Do we stoop to take up the unholy weapons which even Rome is throwing down?

"Is there a man with the least pretension to character among us, who dares even to insinuate his complacency at the check which Catholicism has received by the late outrage? Rebuke and indignation should put him to shame. Nothing is so terrible as persecution. Human nature has never shown itself more fiendish than when it has cloaked its bad passions under the garb of religion, and let them loose against the enemies of God. Religion was given to bind together, refine, soften human hearts. Its great ministry is that of love. But when narrowed into bigotry, when it worships God as the God of a sect, and arms itself in his name with flames or tortures for the suppression of opposite creeds, it is more hardening to the heart, more merciless and unsparing, and presents more insuperable obstacles to the progress of truth and the free development of human nature, than any principle which can be named. We did hope that this crime of dark ages was past; that, among all our vices, persecution by force was at an end; and I know that it is the abhorrence of those to whom I speak, and of the community. But the fact, that any have been found among us, consenting, however indirectly, to the putting down of a sect by force, shows us that the spirit of persecution is not dead. If, then, you meet persons, who, condemning the mob, yet hope advantage from the direction of its fury against a superstitious church, tell them that their language is disloyalty to Protestantism, and pregnant with evil to society and religion; that, could Catholicism be utterly destroyed by such an outrage, the evil would swallow up the imagined good; that the sanction thus given to persecution would bring a flood of crimes and woes into the Church, far worse than the superstition which would be overwhelmed. Tell them, that in their hearts they are the true disciples of the school of the Inquisition, and that perhaps nothing but the power of opinion or the spirit of the age prevents them from reënacting the part of St. Dominick."

The political lesson taught by mobs he thus faithfully interprets.

"I grieve when I hear men referring to the next legislature, as if some stronger laws were all that we need for our security. Let us have these laws; but unless accompanied by wise, patient, generous efforts for the reformation and advancement of the ignorant and exposed classes of the community, they will avail little. Our mobs, though they have spoken in confused and discordant yells, have uttered one truth plainly, — and this truth is, that there exists among us — what ought to exist in no Christian country — a mass of gross ignorance and vice. They teach one plain lesson to the religious, virtuous, philanthropic, educated, refined, and opulent, — and that is, that these have a great work to do, the work of enlightening and lifting up a large portion of their fellow-creatures and their neighbours; that they have no right to spend their lives in accumulating wealth or in selfish indulgences, but that they are to labor, to expend time, thought, wealth, as their circumstances may permit, for the intellectual, moral, spiritual life of a multitude around them, buried in darkness, prejudice, sensuality, excess, and crime. This is the great lesson to be learned from mobs. If we heed not this, if we look for safety to penal laws, rather than to the performance of personal duty, the disinterested labors of Christian love, and the faithful use of the best means of purifying and elevating society, we shall have none to blame but ourselves, if society become the prey of violence and insurrection."

The views here presented are thus enforced in a letter written some years later, on occasion of another popular outbreak.

"*Newport*, June 24, 1837. I thank you for your letter and papers. The mob was a sad affair indeed; and yet such explosions have one use. They show us amidst what inflammable and destructive elements we are living. It is well that evil should sometimes manifest itself. The injury wrought by the mob was nothing. A single fire destroys ten times the property. The infernal spirit which broke forth was the terrible part of the business. There was a meeting held to condemn the deed and repair the injury. There was no meeting to ask how the moral evil, the lawless spirit, the fearful passions, from which all the injury sprang, might be expelled from men's souls, and the pure, generous spirit of Christianity cherished. Thus we go on, filming over the surface, and leaving the deep disease untouched. We have moral means for effecting a great change in our city. Shall they never be used? Shall a considerable portion of our city be always left to temptation, ignorance, corrupting associations, with comparatively no concern for their spiritual well-being in those who profess to have attained to some illumination and purity? We are all in fault. Living under institutions which exclude force in a great degree, we will not supply the place of force by moral applications to the endangered. How little concern has the Temperance effort, for instance, awakened in those who ought to do most for society! I rejoice in your devotion to this cause. Go on, and let your zeal extend beyond this to all the means of benefiting your race."

These extracts prove how deeply Dr. Channing was convinced that the security and strength of free governments are to be found in the general culture and the cordial intercourse of all classes of citizens. His want of confidence in force and penalties as means of order in republics appears very clearly in a letter occasioned by the struggle to secure universal suffrage in his native State.

"*Lenox, Mass.*, July 3, 1842.* My dear Sir, — I received, a short time since, your discourse on the Rhode Island troubles, and was truly grateful for it. Your views are fitted to do much good, though on one point I, who reside at a distance, have a somewhat different state of feeling. I have never doubted that the great mass of the 'Suffrage party' started with a truly honest purpose, and with a thorough conviction of right. Indeed, I suppose all thought themselves in the right. The doctrine, that 'the majority ought to govern,' passes with the multitude as an intuition, and they have never thought how far it is to be modified in practice, and how far the application of it ought to be controlled by other principles. The Suffrage party were inflamed and confirmed by fierce spirits through the country, and still more, they had just cause of complaint against the charter. The disfranchisement of so great a number, who, according to our republican creed had a right to vote, and the enormous and unjust inequalities of representation in the northern and southern parts of the State, were serious grievances, — giving no ground for the use of force against the existing government, indeed, but very naturally leading the half-educated multitude to believe in their right to get rid of this government in any way whatever. The existence of these wrongs in the established system has always made me look with great tenderness on the rash steps of the revolutionists. I do believe that the idea of right has been present to their minds, and has done much to hide from them their own violence and wrong-doing. And I insist on this, because I am most desirous that a system of great lenity should be adopted towards these misguided men. I know that the State does not need severity for its own safety; and I hope it will not fall into cruelty from revenge. You have a great influence. I beg you to exert it in the cause of mercy and humanity.

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* To Francis Wayland, D. D.

"In saying this, I am not influenced merely by sympathy with the wrongdoers. I look beyond them, and beyond the present hour. I am most anxious to keep down the thirst for blood in this community. It is the glory of our people, that, amidst their political strifes, human life has been held so sacred, that the civil authorities have been so forbearing, and that even popular masses have shrunk from the carnage so common in the Old World and in former times. I hope that this spirit of humanity will prevail in my native State. There should be no executions. If any one should die by martial law, and by your recent law against treason, he will be regarded as having died for a great principle. The 'democracy' of the country will sympathize with him. Thousands will resolve that he shall not die unavenged. 'Blood for blood' will be the open or secret cry of multitudes, and, in the rapid changes of parties, no one knows what occasions of gratifying the worst passions will occur.

"I have a deep interest in my native State, and I desire nothing for her so ardently, at this trying moment, as that a healing, reconciling policy should be adopted by the prevalent party. Your danger at this moment is not from treason, but from the fierce passions which have been roused, I fear, equally on both sides. To unite the people, to assuage wrath, to subdue revengeful feelings, to reëstablish peaceful relations and good fellowship, — this is the first object to be proposed. The regular government has triumphed so completely, that it can afford to be lenient. A good government is a parent slow to take life. The mass of the insurgents are punished enough in their disappointment and disgrace. As to Dorr, I rejoice that he has escaped. When I think of him as an exile, bearing such a load of shame, I wish him no more pain. And what possible harm can a man, who has so dishonored himself in the view of all parties, do to the State? The result of the present outbreak is the best security against future ones. Capital punishment is not needed. By a wise mildness, the good-will of the other States will be secured, and the general cause of order will be strengthened. I will only add, that I hope the Convention will propose to the people a truly liberal constitution. This will be an important means of conciliation, and it is demanded imperiously by the general feelings and practice in New England and through the country.

" For two months and more I have been from home, and confined to a sick-room a good part of the time, and consequently do not know many details of your late conflict. Possibly, a more extensive acquaintance with the facts might modify some of my opinions ; but that the general spirit of my remarks is in harmony with wisdom and sound policy, as well as with Christianity, I cannot doubt.

" With great regard, your friend."

But though thus earnestly advocating the just claims of the Suffrage party, Dr. Channing was not in favor of the unrestricted right of voting. The views which he was inclined to adopt upon this fundamental question are thus expressed.

" I have endeavoured, on all occasions, to disprove the notion, that the laboring classes are unfit depositaries of political power. I owe it, however, to truth to say, that I believe that the elective franchise is extended too far in this country. No man, I think, should be intrusted with this high privilege, who has not been instructed in the principles of our government and in the duties of a good citizen, and who cannot afford evidence of respectability in regard to morals. One of the principal objects of our public schools should be, to train the young of all conditions for the duties of good citizens, to furnish them with the necessary knowledge of principles for the judicious use of political power. The admission of the young to the privilege of voting should be the most solemn public act, the grand national festival. It should be preceded by an examination of the candidates.

It should be accompanied by the most imposing forms, fitted to impress the young and the whole community with the great responsibility and honorableness of this trust.

"None of us seem adequately to understand, that to confer the elective franchise is to admit a man to the *participation of* SOVEREIGNTY, of the supreme power of the state. The levity with which this dignity is conferred, the thoughtlessness with which it has been extended, constitutes one of our great political dangers. Were the proper qualifications for it required, they would not exclude one class rather than another. The aim should be to exclude the unworthy of all classes. A community is bound to provide for itself the best possible government, and this implies the obligation to withhold political power from those who are palpably disqualified by gross ignorance or by profligacy for comprehending or consulting the general welfare, — who cannot exercise the sovereignty, without injuring the commonwealth.

"I am fully aware of the obstacles which the violence of party spirit would throw in the way of the system now proposed, and I cannot but fear that the inconsiderateness with which the highest political power has been squandered in this country has gone too far for remedy. Still, it is useful to hold up to a people what it owes to itself. At least, these remarks will prevent my fellow-citizens from considering me as an advocate of universal suffrage, in the present state of society. I think, however, that a system of education should be established in a republic for the very purpose of making suffrage universal, — that is, for the purpose of qualifying every man to be a voter. But in the case of those who will not avail themselves of the natural means of improvement, political power should be withheld."

In this extract, some remaining influence may be traced of the early Federal training of the writer.

Through life, however, Dr. Channing was steadily becoming more confident in regard to the working of the most popular forms of government. The following letters indicate this democratic tendency.

"*January* 19, 1835.* You ask me if it be true, what travellers have reported, that the spirit of liberty and republicanism is dying in this country? I trust not. I do not wonder at the misapprehension of travellers. . . . . . Travellers make sad mistakes in interpreting our political conversations and movements. At the same time, it is true, that, ever since our Revolution, we have had a number of men who have wanted faith in our free institutions, and have seen in our almost unlimited extension of the elective franchise the germ of convulsion and ruin. When the demagogues succeed in inflaming the ignorant multitude, and get office and power, this anti-popular party increases; in better times, it declines. It has been built up, in a measure, by the errors and crimes of the Liberals of Europe. Add to this, that wealth, fashion, and cultivated talent are everywhere exclusive, affect superiority, and look down on the multitude with indifference or contempt, and you will have the explanation of our aristocracy. It has no weight, however, in the country. Its worst effect is, that it stirs up jealousies in the working classes.

"The truth is, human nature works among us very much as with you. The aristocratic and levelling principles are contending together, and will contend until Christian and nobler views of human nature shall establish the true relation between man and man. The only formidable evil in this country is slavery."

"*October* 25, 1840.† I am truly glad that Professor

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* To the Rev. George Armstrong. † To William Rathbone, Esq.

Smyth received any pleasure from my notice of his work. I have now read both volumes, and the impressions made by the first are all confirmed. . . . . . But what I particularly regret is the severe sentence he passes on republican or democratic institutions. He maintains that these do not admit a proper executive power. This opinion he grounds chiefly on the weakness of the Continental Congress during our Revolution, which, indeed, put our liberties in peril That Congress was not properly a government; it was rather a committee of the different States, having no power to tax the people, but simply to recommend taxes to the State legislatures. These legislatures were the only governments; and though got up in a moment of insurrection, they were able to keep order in a country overrun with an enemy. This is no mean testimony to their efficacy.

" Our present federal government, framed deliberately after the Revolution, is a fair specimen of republican institutions. And what is the result, — that the executive proves too weak? At this moment, the outcry of the old Federalists, of the very men most anxious for a strong government, is, that the balance of the system is endangered by the growth of the executive power. It was a common remark, that President Jackson had more power than your King William. Besides the great patronage which the astonishing growth of the country has thrown into the President's hands, it is found, that, in the present stage of society, a free country must be broken into, and governed by, parties, and that among us the stronger party is represented by the President, who is, indeed, its head, and is sustained in all his measures *by its whole power*. Undoubtedly, a dominant party may help to secure itself in some exigency by relaxing the authority of the laws; but the expedient is a dangerous one, and cannot go far in an industrious, commercial, and tolerably enlightened community, where the people at large have a plain interest in social order and in the rights of property.

"In this country, besides the general government, we have twenty-six State governments, purely republican, and in their constitutional sphere independent of each other and of Congress; and one third of these States have shot up suddenly in the wilderness, a circumstance most unfavorable to rigid execution of law. Yet the country, as a whole, is not surpassed in point of order. Our institutions, in their infancy, have stood the storm of the French Revolution, the tendencies to lawlessness in new settlements, and terrible commercial convulsions, springing from a reckless spirit of speculation. Have they severer trials to fear? In your country a very strong government is rendered necessary by the unnatural state of society, artificial ranks, exclusive privileges, fearful inequalities of condition, the ignorance and degradation and misery of the working classes, an intolerable debt, vast and distant colonies, and a most cumbrous state machinery required to manage such an unwieldy and disproportioned whole. A government starting on just and simple principles, and proposing, as its first object, to establish and enforce an equal and wise jurisprudence, so that *the rights of all* may be equally secure, will require but little comparative force.

"I have written thus largely, because I want Professor Smyth to think better of republics. I know their danger, but they seem to me the fittest institutions for a man to live under. Can you give him my views?"

"*June* 20, 1841.* I wish your venerable friend, Mr. Smyth, had, for his own sake, or the comfort of his last years, retained his faith in freedom unimpaired. Retain it in a measure he must. He could not live without it, but he fears, I think, more than he need fear. *My* judgment in regard to this country I should not think of stating to him again; but it is worthy of his consideration, that our conservatives, our alarmists, the men who sympathize with him most, all agree in the belief, that the balance of the Constitution has been endangered by the increase of the executive power. I feel more and more the difficulty of judging of new institutions, especially in a foreign country. The great danger to our institutions, which alarms our conservatives most, has not, perhaps, entered Mr. Smyth's mind. It is the danger of a party organization so subtle and strong as to make the government the monopoly of a few leaders, and to insure the transmission of the executive power from hand to hand, almost as regularly as in a monarchy. A sagacious and old conservative told me, a few months ago, that the Democratic party under Jackson and Van Buren had become so trained, so closely bound together, especially by the executive patronage, that nothing but the late tremendous suffering of the country could have stirred it up to throw off the yoke. His statement I think exaggerated, but that this danger is real cannot be doubted. So that we have to watch against despotism as well as, or more than, anarchy.

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* To Mrs. Wm. Rathbone.

"Mr. Rathbone, too, fell into an error. He saw, in the escape from punishment of the men who burnt the Catholic convent and the Pennsylvania Hall, signs of the weakness of our government. These men escaped wholly in consequence of our adhering to the English institution of *trial by jury*. The men would have been punished, could they have been convicted. But popular prejudice and passion rendered it impossible to get sufficient evidence, or an impartial jury. In the case of Pennsylvania Hall, the trial for damages is still going on. My friends hope for a favorable verdict. In this case we see that no institutions, however good, can be enjoyed without experience of evil. We must take things as they are. A free government undoubtedly has its evils. A people, on the whole, are poor rulers, but far better than kings and aristocracies. All governments are and must be bad, till men grow wiser and better.

"The advantage of popular institutions is, that they are founded in natural right, that they educate and elevate a people more than any other, and thus, in the long run, that the people will learn their true interest, whilst privileged orders must, from the nature of the case, postpone this interest to their own."

The more Dr. Channing's faith in man deepened, the less did he look to government in any form, or controlled by any party, as a trustworthy means of human elevation. He was jealous of power, whether wielded by the few or the many. His estimate of existing parties and of their tendencies will best appear by giving a few extracts from his correspondence.

"*Philadelphia*, May 27, 1835. Were you here, you would be in your element, for the political fever rages not a little, and boys and men talk as ardently about President and Bank as you could desire. I keep myself in peace. I hear sad predictions; but passion is a poor prophet, and I trust more to my own calm anticipations. No convulsions are near, but the age is a troubled one, and every young man should be brought up to make great sacrifices for his country, and for the rights and happiness of mankind. I confess I have a desire to make a hero of you; not a vulgar one, not a bloody one, but ready to face any and every thing in obedience to your conscience and highest principles."

"*March*, 1836.* As to our political state, we are contending and croaking as usual. We are very unreasonable. We choose to have a popular government, but are not willing to accept its essential condition, namely, that it shall have the imperfections of the people. An absolute sovereign may get in advance of his people, but a people cannot get in advance of itself, and it must govern according to its own character. If, instead of croaking, we would try to improve our sovereign, we should show a little comprehension of our situation."

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* To George Ticknor, Esq.

" *Boston*, November, 1837.* You see by the papers that the Whigs are triumphing here. They owe their success to the immediate pressure, and not to the diffusion of large views or great principles. On one account, at least, I rejoice in it. The Democratic party have proved false to their principles by subserviency to executive usurpation. They deserve to be punished, and I hope will not suffer in vain. The Democracy are in more danger from their leaders than from their opponents. Will 'the people' never succeed in placing at their head men of truly generous spirits, who love them for something besides their votes, and desire earnestly their elevation? The Whigs, if they succeed, cannot secure their ascendency more effectually than by adopting a popular, liberal policy, by sympathizing with the laboring classes, by avoiding even the appearance of favoring monopoly, or of partiality to the moneyed class. I should rejoice to see them triumph by such means, for their party does include the best men. But parties are proverbially blind. We shall have no domestic quiet. The late conflicts have not fixed any great, immutable principle in men's minds; and without these there can be no stability."

1837.† "I rejoice to find any portion of your Democratic brethren taking the ground of peace. I have little confidence in this party, because it is a *party*, and of consequence prepared to make any and every sacrifice to its own success. How I should rejoice to find the real friends of the people coming together, and striving, through good and evil report, for each and every man's rights, liberties, education, and elevation, for the spirit of brotherhood, for universal peace, and for the freest intercourse of nations! That the Democratic party would yield its full proportion of such friends of the people, I doubt not. But I hope nothing from it as a party."

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* To Miss Harriet Martineau.

† To J. L. O'Sullivan, Esq.

" *Boston*, January 11, 1840. It is expected, but not certain, that Mr. Morton will be governor. Still the Whig interest seems to be too strong to be put down at once. This party has the wealth, and in so rich a State has great advantages for perpetuating its power. No party, however, which thinks only of securing wealth, can last long. There must be some higher principle. What will be done with Temperance I know not; but no party will give it legislative aid, if by so doing power is to be lost. I do not, however, doubt or fear as to the cause, let politicians do as they may. It grieves me to see our institutions so dishonored by interested individuals and parties, but perhaps the wonder is that they work so well, when we think of the imperfect education of the people."

" *February* 7, 1842.* It is a singular problem, how a people, so practical and intelligent in the main as we are, should be represented by such a set of men. What increases the mystery is, that most of these men, taken singly and in private life, are respectable. The solution is, that political power is more blinding, corrupting, and maddening than any other, and the lesson is, to restrict government to the very narrowest powers which social order requires. Europe, looking at our House of Representatives, must think us a nation of half-fools or half-madmen ; and yet we are far in advance of Europe. It is only on the political stage that we play such antics. The people seem to be more alive to the disgrace brought on the country by Congress. But it will be long before the wild spirits of the West and South will be tamed."

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* To Harmanus Bleecker, Esq.

"*March* 1, 1842.* The political state of the country is exceedingly perplexed. The Whig party has little unity, and is threatened with dissolution by President Tyler's veto on their National Bank bill, a measure maintained chiefly on party grounds. Would the Democrats break up too, and could we start afresh, the government would probably be less of an evil than it is. I am a thorough republican, as you know, but I have no great faith in the people, any more than in kings, as legislators, and I ask of both to govern as little as possible. In the present state of the world, King Log seems the best king. I trust we are growing up to a comprehension of the good of nations and individuals, which will make government a safer machine."

From the following passages it will be seen how clearly Dr. Channing recognized that the aristocratic and democratic elements, innate and uneradicable as they are, are contending under new banners and with new weapons, and that the political struggle of this generation is between money and man, the owners of past labor and the toiling producers. It was very obvious to him that a new era has opened, — the reign of commerce and combined capital, — and that the passion for property is the tyrant chiefly now to be dreaded as the foe to freedom. He thus exposes the mercenary spirit which has usurped control over politicians, parties, and humane principles.

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* To George Combe, Esq.

"*April* 22, 1837.* I am more and more struck with the mournful effects of the infinite, intense thirst for gain and accumulation here. It takes so much the form of insanity, that one may, on that account, charge on it the less immorality. The spirit of commercial gambling, or what is called by courtesy speculation, has infected almost all ranks, and all are now tasting its bitter fruits. But I care little for these fruits comparatively. The suffering we deserve. The unprincipledness which has led to it is shocking. My comfort is, that the present condition of society must wear out. It is, perhaps, a necessary stage, but a better civilization will succeed it. This people will find out, at length, that money is not the supreme end of the social compact; that republican institutions in particular have liberty and improvement, and the development of human nature, for their objects, not a miserable, degrading drudgery for accumulation. I sometimes desire ardently to be transported to some simple and comparatively poor condition of society, where I might meet greater respect for human nature, and a sincere prevalent devotion to the spiritual purposes of human life."

"*August* 23, 1837.† The *morals of commerce* is truly a great subject, especially in our two countries. So vast and various are our commercial relations, that they do much to determine individual character, and a man violating principle in these is inflicting the deadliest wound on his virtue. Much might be done by a strong, clear exposition of the rights and duties, the true principles, and the perils of trade. The cure, however, requires deeper applications. The unmastered, immeasurable passion for gain lies at the root of the evil, and this is to be met by a higher, wiser application of Christian truth. The moral sense on this subject is to be *created.* I have often been struck with the entire composure with which a congregation will hear their worldliness rebuked, when they would wince if any acknowledged vice were charged on them. They really see no guilt in an entire absorption in outward interests. We want a new administration of Christianity and moral truth. It is cheering to me to find your mind so alive to the great principles which ought to be enthroned in every heart."

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* To George Ticknor, Esq.

† To William Rathbone, Esq.

"*April*, 1840.* Our country is suffering severely from commercial depression. An inflated currency, which gave birth and means to excessive and unprincipled speculation, is producing its natural effects. In nearly half the country, the banks have suspended specie payments, and this derangement of the exchanges has sadly crippled the other parts of the country. Could we learn wisdom by what we suffer, the temporary evil would be as nothing. But the present commercial system seems essentially corrupt. I see, however, that the present has grown out of the past, that it is a necessary stage of society, that its evils are connected with, if not results of, newly developed principles and energies, which the experience of centuries may be needed to modify and harmonize. This vast system of Providence stretches beyond our sight on every side. We must not be disheartened by its mysteries, but in a spirit of faith go on to do the best we can for ourselves and our race."

Seeing thus that the progress of civil liberty in the state, and of moral elevation in the individual, is hindered by the absorbing pursuit of gain, and that the insinuating power of commercial speculators, bankers, brokers, and large corporations is gaining mastery over all other elements in the body politic, Dr. Channing found cause for rejoicing in the periods of stagnation and bankruptcy, which, under the present system of competitive anarchy, inevitably alternate with those of fevered enterprise. In preaching and in conversation he took advantage of these pauses to administer the frankest words of counsel to all within the sphere of his influence; and his letters will exhibit the uncompromising fidelity with which he interpreted the teachings of Providence.

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* To M. J. C. L. Simonde de Sismondi.

" *December* 31, 1841.* I wish I could send you any better accounts of our financial concerns. There are fears that some of the States will refuse to pay the interest of their debts, and that we are to be disgraced still more in the eyes of the world. It is some comfort to know that no foreigner has a right to complain of New England. It ought, too, to be added, that our people have got into their difficulties very much through ignorance. Our State legislatures, which are competent to ordinary matters, are unfit to devise and carry on public works, and know little of finance and of the arts of stock-jobbers. The consequence is, that, through the unskilfulness or frauds of their agents, and the tricks of the stock market, some, perhaps most, of the indebted States have been cheated out of no small part of the loans for which their bonds were given. The people in their simplicity have all along been deceived by the fair promises of leaders and interested men, and now that they wake up to the truth, they not unnaturally, though very unwarrantably, seek pretexts for breach of faith in the wrongs and artifices which have been practised on themselves.

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* To Thomas Thornely, Esq.

"I deplore greatly this dishonesty in States, and the sufferings of individuals which must follow; but I have little doubt that in the end we shall have a sounder state of things. The prodigality and recklessness of our State legislatures, which have inflicted incomparably greater evil on this country than on foreign creditors, are brought to an end, and the people have learned a salutary jealousy of those bodies which will not soon die. Meanwhile, the whole community must bear the reproach which belongs to a small part. This is a necessary consequence of our political union, nor do I desire to avert it. It is by such retributions that the importance of national character is more felt. I have no despondence. We have great evils here, as everywhere, to encounter, but there is an amount of intelligence and energy which must at length triumph."

"*Boston*, January 21, 1842. I am sure that some good is to come from our present difficulties. The State legislatures will be kept to their proper spheres. Our facilities of credit will be diminished; and I hope, that, what with the loss of reputation, and what with the suspension of public works, immigration will also be diminished. The 'credit system,' as it is called, has wrought immense evil, and it has received a blow not easily to be recovered from. . . . . . The sum is, let us, as individuals and as a people, be scrupulously honest. The papers speak of Judge Hopkinson's dangerous sickness. He ought to be honored for the lessons of pecuniary integrity he gave to his fellow-citizens. You young men cannot feel too strongly the importance of 'common honesty.'

"I am most anxious that the insolvent States should pay their debts, and not bring infamy on us all. The late resolve in the Pennsylvania legislature is encouraging. How far is it a true exponent of public feeling? The resolution passed quite unanimously, indeed, but it is not decisive. Men are always honest, just as they are Antislavery, in the abstract; but it is easy to defeat, by management and specious obstructions, the operation of a principle for which we have been clamorous. Our late credit system and the common maxims of trade have corrupted the people sadly. I am not for setting on foot an anti-commercial society, but the stimulants to trade and money-getting in our country have done incalculable harm."

"*February* 7, 1842.* I dare say doleful sounds are borne to you across the ocean. Our country is disgraced abroad, but to me its prospects are much brighter at home. It is an immense good that our credit in Europe is so shaken. We have been ruined by the facility of borrowing, and by the madness of speculation which this generated. What we called our prosperity was bloated and false,—the prosperity of a spendthrift. Things, they say, are coming to a *crisis;* which means, that the men who cannot pay will cease to pass for solvent,—that rotten banks will be broken, &c.,—that there will be a crash of those who ought to have fallen long ago. But can relief come in any other way? At least, such seems to me the state of things, as I look at it at a distance.

"I confess, when I look at the mad career of individuals and States, I rather wonder that we are let off so easily. The idea that the country is to sink under its present burdens is absurd beyond measure. That our bank system will work us a great deal of evil, when business revives, I take for granted; but our experience cannot be wholly lost. Perhaps the States which have suffered most may be the first to reform the currency, and may give lessons to their neighbours. Congress is in a bad state,—factious, furious, senseless; and if I did not see that there are mighty causes at work in the country, which a few mad or selfish politicians at Washington cannot control, I might fear. Happily, they waste their strength in fighting against one another, and do nothing; a policy, I apprehend, far wiser than either party left to itself would give us."

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* To Harmanus Bleecker, Esq.

"*March* 1, 1842.* I do not wonder that Europe raises a cry of indignation against this country. I wish it could come to us in thunder. My patriotism does not incline me to cloak the sins of my country. I wish them cured. You, however, must understand how unjust these sweeping censures are. Not a stain rests on the good faith of New England and New York, and of the great majority of the States.

"Bad faith in public matters and private integrity are not seldom found in strange union. To measure the guilt of these people, you must suppose your countrymen placed in the same situation. You must suppose universal suffrage introduced into Great Britain. Do you think that your national debt would be safer than that of Mississippi? I do not say this by way of excuse, — for none can be made, — but only to show, that, in the most hopeless parts of our country, you meet nothing worse than you find everywhere. Is not your national debt secure, chiefly because the creditors hold the reins of government?

"I look on this country as in a better condition now than in its 'prosperous days.' These States and individuals borrowed recklessly and spent prodigally. Our prosperity was a show. Now, we know where we stand. Now, a check has been given to the State governments which will never be forgotten, and I think it a great gain that the people have grown jealous of State legislation. Our credit abroad is shaken, and this is a great good; for excess of credit has been almost our ruin. At this moment, even, we are trusted too easily. We have had recently a severe money-pressure, from excess of importations. Could credit and immigration from Europe be exceedingly abridged, our chance would be much better. Another good is, that the monstrous evils of our banking system have been brought to light, and the whole people have learned a lesson of wisdom on this point which must bear powerfully on the government. You hear the word 'distress' in the cities, but the mass of the people enjoy a prosperity unparalleled on the earth.

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* To George Combe, Esq.

"I want Europe to shame us out of our crimes, and care not how severely our *real* sins are reproved. Nor am I anxious to oppose the misapprehensions of Europe about us; because these can do us no harm, because they are obstinately cherished, and because they must give way at last to the great fact of our progress, if our progress is to continue. Nothing can arrest this progress but war, and divisions growing out of slavery. The opinion of Europe has never troubled me. But to you, who are a true friend of the country and of freedom, I would say, that you need have no fear about us, except that general apprehension which human frailty obliges us to feel about every thing below."

"*August* 10, 1842.* The trading community suffer much, and this must be, not only from past rashness, but because we have twice as many people in trade as the exchange of the products of the country requires. This is a natural consequence of the spread of education, and will correct itself in time. An educated man would rather live by his wits than his hands, and consequently there has been a great rush into trade, where it was supposed, that, by the union of shrewdness with enterprise, men might grow rich with little toil. We are outgrowing this delusion. Agriculture, the true work of man, is getting into favor and honor, and the next generation may be saved from the crimes and miseries of excessive, unbounded competition in trade."

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* To William Rathbone, Esq.

But though thus just in his recognition of the peculiar temptations and faults of his countrymen, Dr. Channing was not inclined to receive passively the indiscriminate criticism of travellers and of foreign nations. It will be seen from the following letters how firm, while candid, he was in asserting the claims of the United States to respect.

"*June* 14, 1837.* I am reading Miss Martineau's book with much interest. I see in it a genuine expression of her mind, and feel that I have the whole of what she thinks of the country. Should other people tell us the whole, should we be equally satisfied ? No honest book of travels can be popular in the country of which it treats. She falls into a great many errors, as I expected. But I consider, that, if she does not know us thoroughly, neither do we know ourselves ; and we undoubtedly reject as apocryphal what is true. The great fault of the book is its presumption ; for what warrant has a traveller, under her circumstances, to pass such decisive judgments on such an infinity of matters ? And yet, I do not know a traveller who is not chargeable with the same fault. I seldom hear the conversation of men or women returned from Europe, without being surprised at the sweeping sentence which they pass on what they could not comprehend.

"You see I am very lenient towards the faults of Miss Martineau, whilst I admire her generous, bold, uncompromising adherence to the great principles of freedom and humanity. As to being angry, I cannot; for the opinions of travellers about our country seem to me of too little moment to give any body uneasiness. . . . . .

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* To Joseph Tuckerman, D. D.

"Her unpardonable sin is, that she is honest. Who of us would bear the honesty which should tell us all our faults? No country is worthy of respect. So says the minister, every Sunday, who acknowledges in prayer, and rebukes in preaching, the corruptions around him; and yet, when a stranger tells us of our follies and sins, we wonder at his or her abusiveness. Such occasions show us the real blindness of a people to its own moral evils."

"*Newport*, June 23, 1838. Of late, I have felt little inclination to labor in any way, and even a letter has been something of a mountain to me. This is a great trial, for I have much work on my hands, and just now see an opportunity of doing good; but I fear I must let it pass. In the last London Quarterly Review is a review of my Letter on Texas, in which my strictures on our country are treated as proofs of the failure of our popular institutions. I should like to write another letter to show that these institutions are worthy of higher reverence and confidence than they have yet received, and, under this general topic, to introduce some important truths greatly needed now. This is in my mind, but all attempts at writing have as yet exhausted me, and I may not regain strength until the occasion is gone. I do not, however, suffer myself to despond. I have entire, unshaken confidence in God. I know his paternal interest in his human family, and that he will never want instruments for the great work of their regeneration."

"*September* 24, 1838.* I offer these remarks, because, in consequence of my Letter on Texas, you seem to look more doubtingly towards this country. I meant that Letter for my own people, and little expected it would draw attention abroad; and I was so desirous to inspire salutary fear and compunction, that I threw into the picture the darker shades only. There is, indeed, much evil here, as there must be in our present civilization. The spirit of gain has seized on all countries, and, whilst it is accomplishing many important purposes, and is perhaps essential to the supplanting of the old aristocracies, and to the forming of new connections among countries which nothing but commerce could bring together, many of its immediate influences are degrading. A selfish, mercenary spirit must become rife. In such an age, the idea of Property may be expected sometimes to take rank of Liberty. Still, I see signs of progress at home."

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* To Lant Carpenter, D. D.

1839. "I have been struck of late with the disposition throughout Europe to throw the blame of all that is evil in this country on our *free institutions*, as if freedom were the only element of our social constitution. The truth is, that freedom, at this moment particularly, has less influence than other peculiarities in our state. Our most striking peculiarity is, that we are a young people, bringing all the powers of an advanced civilization and very singular energies of industry and enterprise to bear on a new country of inexhaustible resources. Every day discloses to us new mines of wealth. In addition to our own capital, which has increased immensely, foreign capital is pouring in, and opportunities of profitable investment seem to increase in still greater proportion. The consequence you can easily conceive. The minds of the people are intoxicated with a stimulant which human nature has never yet been strong enough to resist. The spirit of speculation, the passion for unbounded accumulation, rages among us. We think little about politics, compared with public improvements, as they are called, new applications of steam, new settlements in the Far West, &c. In such a state of things, no man has a fixed position. Hardly any man has the strong, local feeling of other countries. A mighty stream of population, bearing away our adventurous youth, is setting westward. Journeys of five hundred or a thousand miles are an amusement to us. The imagination is at work continually on the distant and the vast. The result is a very vigorous though partial development of human nature. We understand positive material interests better than any other people. . . . . . But the effect of this boundless external activity is, that the inward, spiritual, higher interests of humanity are little comprehended, prized, or sought. We surpass even England in worldly utilitarianism. The worth of the higher intellectual and moral culture of arts and studies which refine and elevate is not felt as it should be ; but this has nothing to do with our freedom, or is not to be charged on our free institutions.

" It is a remarkable fact, that, with all this worldly activity, there is a higher standard among us than anywhere else. My personal observation is, indeed, confined very much to Boston. I have seen the population of that place quadrupled, and its wealth multiplied in vastly greater proportion ; and I am confident that there has been a decided advance in religion, philanthropy, and general virtue, as well as in intelligence. I fear that the same praise cannot be given to the other large cities, for they have been more overflowed by emigrants and have wanted our means of education. Still, when I consider the tendency of our peculiar situation to unsettle and materialize the minds of men, I wonder that our moral condition is as sound as it is, and I see in it a much stronger argument for than against free institutions. To those who measure institutions by prosperity, ours must be the very best ever devised, for never were people so prosperous.

"For myself, I would we were less prosperous. Our freedom and glory are endangered by our rapid growth, especially by our growth from abroad. Our foreign population is becoming a great evil. Our fathers, never dreaming of what has taken place, and wishing to make our country an asylum for oppressed humanity, began with giving the rights of citizenship on too easy terms, and we have gone on from bad to worse, until the elective franchise is lavished on ignorant hordes from Europe, who cannot but abuse it. This profanation of so high a privilege moves my indignation. You misunderstood me, when you supposed me to say, that our present civilization increases the distance between the higher and lower classes generally. I said, that it creates a more decided pauperism.

"In closing, let me add, that I do not despair on account of the material tendencies of my countrymen. Perhaps it is well that human nature should work itself out fairly in one direction. It is too noble and various to work always in one way. A higher activity is to manifest itself, though perhaps not in my day."

"*March* 19, 1840.* I am sorry you have seen so much to the disadvantage of my countrymen, and yet I wish the truth to be seen and told. Not that I expect any sudden changes from the fresh expression of opinion. Our country is swept along by mighty impulses. The causes which act on character are extensive and exceedingly strong. There is so much in our condition to stir up restlessness, wild schemes, extravagant speculation, a grasping spirit, ambition, and fanaticism, in a thousand infectious forms, that there is not much chance for reflection, for moral self-determination. Something may be done to stay the torrent, but merely moral influences cannot avail much. The stern, terrible lessons of Providence are needed by such a people, and these form a part of every nation's experience. It seems to me, that never was a people so tried and tempted as ours. Freedom alone, so unobstructed as we enjoy it, is a sufficient trial; but in addition to this are our immense territory with its infinite and undeveloped resources, the innumerable openings for enterprise, the new and unexampled applications of science to art, the miracles of machinery, of steam by land and water. All these combined are enough to madden a people. That a worldly, material, mercenary, reckless spirit should spring up amid these circumstances, we must expect.

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* To George Combe, Esq.

"Few look on the present stage of society with less satisfaction than I do; and yet it seems a necessary stage, and I see in it the promise of something better. The commercial system, which is the strongest power of our times, is, for the most part, my abhorrence; and yet I do see that it is breaking down the feudal system, the military system, old distinctions and old alienations, and establishing new ties among men. I therefore hope, nor do I think moral means useless, though other causes are for the time triumphant. You and I may still work in faith. The reckless activity of the people is better than torpidness, and there are good minds open to truth. I suppose I live in the most illuminated region, and I do see, amidst many unpromising circumstances, a spirit of improvement at work, especially among the laboring class."

"*August* 28, 1841.* I have ceased to find fault with the form you have given to your 'Notes on America.' I should prefer a more systematic arrangement; but I am reading them as they are with much pleasure. They seem to me to show greater insight into the country, to be more just to our character and institutions, than any thing I have seen. In truth, I have read few books describing us by the English, for that nation seems to me to be singularly wanting in the power of comprehending other countries, and a glance at their travels here has generally satisfied me. I hear your work spoken of with great satisfaction."

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* To George Combe, Esq.

Dr. Channing was earnest that the United States should be faithful to their rare privilege of manifesting among the nations a higher form of liberty, justice, peace, and felt an elevating sentiment of honor in view of the glorious destiny to which his country, if worthy, might attain. But longing for the elevation of humanity at large, and, looking upon Christendom as a grand fraternity, he watched with most cordial sympathy and joy every struggle for the elevation of the people in all lands. Especially towards England did he turn with gratitude and hope. His desire of friendly relations between the United States and Great Britain, and his profound interest in her political progress, are fully exhibited in his correspondence.

" *May* 27, 1825. I was sorry to discover in your remarks something of what I may call the bigotry of republicanism, by which I mean the persuasion, that liberty can only subsist under such institutions as ours, and the consequent habit of looking with a hostile eye on all other institutions. This seems to me an example of an error so common as to deserve a place among Bacon's idols, the error of confounding the means with the end. You speak as if we alone were free, because we alone act throughout on the system of *election*, when England, our mother, and the fountain of all our liberal institutions, is free in spite of an hereditary king and nobility. It is wrong to suppose that public opinion can embody and express itself only through elections. There are other ways; perhaps there is no country in the world where public opinion reigns more than in England. Yet you have made no distinction between that country and the other monarchies of Europe.

"It grieved me, that, in so excellent a discourse, any thing should be said or implied to diminish the sympathy, already too faint, with that admirable country, on which God has bestowed for two centuries the signal honor of being the bulwark of Protestant and free principles. Nowhere on earth will you find a people more high-minded, more jealous of their rights, more bold in expressing their thoughts, more resolute and earnest in putting forth all the powers of human nature, than in England; and irreconcilable as the fact may be with our theories, we there see, under an aristocracy which holds a large part of the real estate of the kingdom, an improved and productive agriculture, giving to the country an aspect of beauty and fruitfulness, which makes this and other countries appear as if they were but half redeemed from a state of nature.

"True liberty rests upon and consists in nothing so much as a *free press*, that is, in intellectual liberty, in liberty to think and speak, and to influence other minds to the full extent of the individual's power. This creates what we call public opinion, an influence which cannot be said to exist anywhere in Europe, save in England, and which operates there with astonishing energy. The power of the press in England is exceedingly aided by local causes. The existence of a metropolis like London — that 'mighty heart' through which the whole blood of the empire circulates, and which sends forth in a single day through every village the report of a public man's services or misdeeds — produces a quick common feeling, communicates an electric impulse to the whole body, of which no other country is susceptible. The power of public opinion has been remarkably manifested in the change whereby the restrictive system, which has been looked to for ages as a nation's safeguard and source of wealth, is giving way to the improved intelligence of the people, and the freest doctrines as to the intercourse of nations are not only avowed, but embodied into the commercial code. Look at the immense public works of England, carried on, not by government, but by private associations; and who is not struck with the confidence of man in man, the power of equal laws, and the unbounded energy of character, implied in these?

"But I am not only sorry that you have been unjust to England, the great teacher and a noble model of freedom; your remarks tend, I fear, to injure the good cause, by teaching the irreconcilableness of royalty and aristocracy with human improvement and liberty,—a doctrine which, in proportion as it spreads, must give a desperateness to the opposition which sovereigns will make to free institutions, and must exasperate the passions of the people against their old civil establishments. Why not teach monarchs that their power will be more stable and extensive, as in England, by giving to public opinion a strong action on the government, and by calling forth the intelligence, energy, industry, and spirit of the people, those true sources of national wealth and greatness? Why not teach subjects, that they are to better their condition and extend their power, not so much by innovations borrowed from countries with which they have little common feeling, as by improvement of what is good in their own condition, by building on old foundations, by growth rather than subversion, by changes which will connect their future with their past history, by institutions suited to their genius, habits, and national character, and, though last, not least, by efforts to advance in knowledge, and industry, and moral worth? The plan of giving the same institutions to all nations seems to me too technical and empirical; and I fear we are not authorized to believe that institutions formed, as ours have been, in the infancy of the science of government, though improvements on all which preceded them, are so perfect as to merit universal imitation.

"The amount of what I would say is this. I wish that we might speak more diffidently of ourselves, and in more conciliatory language of others; that we might seek the liberation of the world by improvement rather than convulsion; that we might 'preach peace' to monarchs and subjects; that we might never speak of war, especially of civil war, but with the aversion and horror which Christianity and philanthropy inspire. As for kings, whilst we remember that they are men like ourselves, and not a whit better than their poorest subjects, let us not deny them the candor and kindness due to *men*. They are made masters of nations by the accident of birth, not by their own will, and most of them, if they would, could not innocently abdicate their thrones; for nations, untrained to the functions of self-government, if suddenly called to their exercise, would soon fill the vacant thrones with worse tyrants than their old masters. Liberty is not the growth of violence. It is, indeed, the greatest political good, 'to be prized above all price'; but it is also a moral good, and is to be diffused by nothing so effectually as by that spirit of love which makes man dear to man, and by which Christianity, in proportion as it is better understood, will bind together all orders of society."

"*Boston*, November 30, 1827.* I desire to do something to make our two countries better acquainted with each other, and I know no way so effectual as a free interchange of thought between those who without vanity may lay claim to some enlargement of mind.

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* To Miss Jane E. Roscoe.

"I see what is called national spirit working a thousand evils, but it is never worse employed than in separating two countries which are the chosen abodes of freedom, and which are intrusted with the dearest interests of the human race. I know that this feeling of nationality has done good, especially in rude ages, when men could not take in a larger idea than that of tribe or country, and when no other motive of a generous kind could counteract selfish and sordid tendencies. I can admire Roman patriotism, unjust and cruel as it was; for it carried the individual in a measure out of himself, or more properly, gave a generous cast to his selfishness; but I should mourn if I thought the human mind capable of nothing nobler, and I am sure that Christianity is meant to pour a quite different and more celestial fervor through the soul. We owe to nationality national independence, not civil and personal liberty; and this last is the great interest and hope of human nature. Let its friends, however separated by oceans or tongues, feel themselves brethren, and cherish a union stronger than that of country.

"This may be thought an interest for *men* only to think and write about. But believing, as I do, that liberty is a *moral* good, to be promoted, not by the sword, but by magnanimity of thought and feeling, by a conviction of what we were made for, of the dignity of our intellectual and moral being, I feel that woman may do her full share towards the liberation of the world."

"*St. Croix*, 1831.* I rejoice in the bright prospects opening on England. You are to have reform, and to gain it peaceably, and at the right moment, that is, when you are grown up to the blessing. It comes to you as the necessary result of the growing intelligence and wealth of the people, and these, joined with the good principles of the middle class, will make it a blessing. It is a stage of a mighty revolution which has long been going on, and I hope will give a peaceful character to the stages which are to follow."

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* To Mrs. L. Kinder.

"*Boston*, March, 1837.* I am looking, not without solicitude, to your political movements. The triumph of the Tories has been confidently expected here, and we are such good conservatives, that all of us would not groan at that event. These things show how little faith men have in human nature and in its progress. What we have gained seems to most an accident, to have no root in our nature, and accordingly the only wisdom is to hold fast, not to seek for more. My fears, perhaps, are not strong enough. The present state of society has great perils, but not, I think, perils of convulsion. I do not trust to the virtue of the people for tranquillity; but the great principle which is at work everywhere, the spirit of accumulation, is, in the present state of things, eminently conservative. I grieve that the energies of men are so concentrated on this object, that so low a motive almost swallows up others; but we must do it the credit to say, that it favors industry and order."

"*September* 24, 1838.† I anticipate from steam navigation increased intercourse between the two countries of a higher character than has subsisted yet. Hitherto we have exchanged commercial agents, and have known one another by specimens of the money-getting tribe, and those not the best. I hope the intelligent, refined, religious, elevated, will now represent the two countries to each other. If our mother will send some of her worthiest sons to see us, I am sure they will not make her grieve over a degenerate posterity. She will recognize in us, perhaps, some of her own faults, and the faults of youth goaded to excess by peculiar temptations; but I am inclined to believe that she will find few of her works to take more pride in than in this same rebellious but vigorous republic of ours. I call it her work, not merely because she sent out a generous stock that has shot up into a great people, but because our institutions are the expansions of her own free principles."

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* To Miss Harriet Martineau.

† To Lant Carpenter, D. D.

"*September* 25, 1838.* What pains people take to spoil their rulers! What good can a sovereign get from being taught that she is immeasurably raised above her fellow-creatures? No people are the better for being worshipped. One of the serious objections to monarchy is, that it takes the ruler out of his race, and prevents true human sympathy with the multitude of men. I do not doubt that the ceremony of coronation had some foundation in human nature, and awakened strong feeling. But were the true relations and responsibilities of ruler and people brought out? Can it be, that a ceremonial which grew up in feudal ages, that symbols which gave expression to the feelings of the great when the multitude were nothing, should suit these times? However, I am no severe critic of forms. People enjoy spectacles, and the coronation was an imposing one, and made multitudes good-natured, and furnished high and low with a common joy. So far, so good. I believe, too, that, as far as the popular enthusiasm expressed interest in monarchy, it was no evanescent one. You English are not republicans in spirit any more than in theory; and to me it seems that the danger of holding up the highest office as a prize to the ambitious is more and more felt among you. Queen Victoria, for aught I see, is likely to wear the gilt toy on her head without opposition. You are a conservative people, and must be, as long as money is the 'great goddess.' The queen, even, must doff to this sovereign, and the two thrones will uphold each other."

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* To Miss Harriet Martineau.

"*Boston*, February 28, 1840.* I have had a letter from you long unanswered, and I reproach myself the more for my neglect, because I have an interest in obtaining from you more frequent communications. Your views of the state and prospects of your country meet one of my great wants. My thoughts often turn to England. Her energies and means of progress, on the one hand, and her difficulties and distractions, on the other, cannot but give rise to alternate hope and fear, in one who loves her as much as I do. The fearful blot on your society is the degradation of your lower classes. This is only made more prominent and shocking by the opulence and illumination of other ranks. The great work to which you are called is that of lifting the intolerable burden which weighs down vast multitudes around you.

"Nothing moves my indignation more than the narrow policy of your Established Church, which denies the means of education to the people, because it cannot found a system of sectarian influence. I do hope that on this point the Dissenters will maintain their rights with invincible, desperate resolution. Of what avail is the pledge of toleration and religious liberty, given you by government, if the means of national education are to be put into the hands of one sect, whether established or not, and this mighty enginery is to be used permanently and chiefly, not for liberal culture, but for subjection of the young to a particular faith? The repeal of your test-acts and disabilities is all nothing, if the system of national education is to be a Church monopoly. Every man has a right to demand for his children the means of instruction which government accords to his neighbour, and equal respect to his religious convictions. A man, to secure education to his children, ought not to be compelled to put them under religious influences which he disapproves, perhaps abhors. Perhaps I do not understand precisely the pretensions of the Church. She seems to me the great scourge of your country. She has prevented, by her unrighteous claims, the establishment of a system of national education. She infects the people with the most odious bigotry. I do not meet, even in the writings of Catholics, a more bitter spirit than breathes through much that is written in behalf of your Establishment. In Ireland what a curse is the Establishment!

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* To William Rathbone, Esq.

"I have just been looking over Inglis's Ireland, and I know not a book to make the heart ache more. I doubt whether even our savage wilds witness such deep and wide-spread misery as Ireland. She is not only more wretched than all civilized regions, but even than the uncivilized. And Ireland lies but a few miles from the richest and most enlightened country in Europe, and is a part of the same empire. Is this terrible reproach never to be wiped from Great Britain?

"To return to the system of a national education; the Dissenters should speak on this point to the government with a voice not to be misunderstood. They should say, 'Our children shall enjoy the same benefits from government as others, nor shall our religious rights in regard to them be in the slightest degree impaired. Let any rights be touched sooner than these. The Church cannot be prostrated too suddenly, if it can stand only by tyranny.' Do give me light on these subjects. If I judge the Church hardly, I should be glad to do her justice. Let her fight her battle vigorously, but in doing so let her observe the laws of honest warfare."

" *Boston*, October 25, 1840.* Your little island is too small a basis for so vast an empire, and it is hard to find a statesman equal to the comprehension of so many and such complicated interests. You meet the fate of all conquering states. To keep what you have, you must grasp more, and every new acquisition is a new point for assault. Your business with China is a sad one. England is to reconcile the world to her ascendency in the East, by showing herself the friend, guardian, civilizer of less improved *races*. That she should be the chief cultivator of a physical and *moral* poison, should labor to force it on a less improved people, and should then turn against this defenceless people the terrors of European warfare, — all this does little credit to her humanity, and shows that in pushing her trade she cares very little for the influence she exerts on the world. Believing, as I do, that England rests on her moral strength, I lament this wound on her good name, as well as shudder at the miseries she is about to inflict in another hemisphere."

" *November* 29, 1840.† At the South, jealous feelings are springing up towards England on the subject of slavery. This matter requires wise handling. I delight in the Anti-slavery feeling of your *people;* but your *government* must in no way attempt to act on slavery in this country. The cause here would suffer from foreign interference. We are too jealous, especially of England. Your Abolitionists, in their zeal, would move heaven and earth to put down slavery at once. I honor their zeal, but something more than zeal is necessary. I should rejoice to see your government promoting the cotton culture in India, but this it must do for the sake of India and England, and not as a war measure against slavery. I beg for peace between our two countries, and yet we do not love one another enough.

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* To William Rathbone, Esq. † To Thomas Thornely, Esq.

" Now and then publications in your country appear, disparaging the military character and power of this country, and they cannot be helped ; but they do harm, for our people have enough of the military madness, though the direction of their energies in other channels prevents its manifestation. Be assured you have not the whole of the Lion on your side of the water. Our fathers brought too much of his blood with them. So infernal is the spirit of war in my sight, and so worthless seems the military glory of a nation, that I grieve when any thing wakes up the old fever of blood in my countrymen. I look on the present commercial spirit of our two countries as excessive, pernicious, degrading, and yet I am reconciled to it in a measure by thinking that it turns the energies of two fierce and restless nations into a better direction than war."

" *Boston*, April 14, 1841.* We have been surprised here by the burst of angry feeling and alarm on your side of the ocean, produced by Mr. Pickens's report. That document, indeed, was indecent and outrageous enough, but it drew little thought here, and was soon forgotten. The ignorance of your countrymen about our affairs made a great deal out of nothing. One of your lords made it a report of the 'Minister of Foreign Affairs,' a name unknown in our government ; when, in fact, it came from the chairman of a committee appointed by the Speaker, and was generally regarded as a matter of party tactics. Then its being published was treated by your people as a bad omen, when, as I understand, the publication of such reports is a matter of course, and the opposition made to the publication of *this* report, which was considerable, was an extraordinary thing. This unlucky document was generally attributed to a desire to embarrass the Whig administration, which was soon to come into power. I believe, however, that another motive was, to propitiate the multitude, by taking what is called a 'spirited tone,' and assuming great sensibility to national honor. I am sorry that such tricks are too rife in all countries where public opinion is a power.

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* To Thomas Thornely, Esq.

"This 'national honor' is a vague phantom, an evil spirit, which I wish I had power to expel from your nation as well as from ours. I believe my love of peace does not lead me astray, when I say, that there is *no* desire of a war here. There are, indeed, bad feelings towards you; but these are of little moment, compared with the general conviction of the importance of peace. All nations discover in their feelings towards one another very much the temper of overgrown boys. This spirit flames out among us every now and then, but the calculating *man* soon returns, and it is almost amusing to observe how, after a week of fever and menace, we settle down quietly, and return to our business, as if nothing had happened. We cannot be said to love John Bull. Indeed, John has not the art of making any body love him. I think, too, that, when your people look into their own hearts and inquire into their feelings towards America, they will be too just to complain of our want of affection. This is to me sad. Having true affection and respect for England, I grieve to see so many of my countrymen provoked by what they think expressions of contempt and a grasping spirit on your part. On both sides are groundless jealousies. But let us not make the case worse than it is. On both sides are very many superior to vulgar prejudices, and who see that the two countries have essentially common interests and strong bonds of union, whilst almost all see that war would be *madness*, if it can possibly be avoided. Ought we not, then, to lay it down as a principle, that war is an *impossibility*, to speak of it as too *insane* to be thought of, and to insist that all difficulties *must* be got over?

"You can judge of our apprehensions of war, when I tell you that not a note of preparation is heard among us. Mr. Pickens's report was laid on the table, and no action had on it. As to McLeod, he is in no danger. As to the Caroline affair, I see no way of disposing of it but by the arbitration of a friendly power. It is next to impossible for either government to get at the precise truth, for each must listen to its own citizens, who are not unexceptionable witnesses. From the nature of the case, there was fault on both sides. How *can* neutrality be enforced on a long line of frontier, most of which is a wilderness? General Scott told me, that the civil authorities were almost prostrated on both sides of the line, and that peace, as far as it was kept, was owing to the military commander of both countries. The weakness of our last administration made matters worse. Things must go on better now that Mr. Webster is at the head of the foreign department, and the reins of government have fallen into more vigorous hands. Can it be, that nations, having nothing to gain and every thing to lose by war, should be driven into it by difficulties in which both governments wish to do right? This is a case in which good Christian men should say to their governments,—'We will not fight. There is no need of war. You can, you must, settle matters peacefully.' Your country is pronounced by some to be, at this moment, in the condition of a wild beast which has just got a taste of blood. Lord Palmerston is called a rash, dashing man, whose imprudence may commit him too far for retreat. But such talk does not trouble me. Little as I respect statesmen and governments, I think there are limits which they cannot pass, and cases too plain for mistake. The present is one."

"*Newport*, July 11, 1841.* In regard to your Chartists, I have a strong interest in them; but I do not know that I can serve them, except by recommending, as I have tried to do, the cause and rights of the depressed and injured to the sympathy and consciences of their fellow-creatures.

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* To Joseph Sturge, Esq.

"I differ from the Chartists in their fundamental point, *immediate* universal suffrage. Suffrage is not merely a power given to the individual for protection of his own rights, but a power of acting on the most sacred rights and interests of the whole community; and if he is *palpably* disqualified to act on these justly and wisely, the power should not be granted. Every individual ought, however, to have the means of qualifying himself for suffrage. The state ought to spare no pains to raise every member from that brutal ignorance and degradation which unfits him for all public action. The cry of the Chartists should be for immediate universal *education*, and for such an education as would prepare them for the elective franchise. In the Chartist book which you refer to, I was greatly pleased and encouraged by finding that this party had discovered the true means of freedom. Nothing but general illumination can give them influence. Enlighten a people, and even under the worst institutions they will be felt. The elective franchise brings no liberty to a grossly ignorant multitude. They are only made the tools of those who can bribe or inflame them, and generally fall into the hands of their enemies. I hope the Chartist project of education will be carried out. If a generous enthusiasm could lead to the formation of a fraternity of teachers among them, who, from love to their brethren, and in a spirit of self-sacrifice, would give themselves up to the instruction of the young, much good might be accomplished.

"I could point out passages in the Chartist pamphlet which I disapproved. Nothing, however, gave me so much sorrow as the apparent want of a just feeling of the importance of religion to the people. Religion is important, essential, to us all, our light and life, and the only source of dignity, freedom, and peace. I do not, however, wonder that so many of the people look on religion as their foe, for it has been a state instrument, a political machine, and is used to keep them down, and not to raise them up. But can they read the New Testament and help seeing that Jesus Christ treated the distinctions of this world with contempt, — that he lived among the poor as his brethren, — that he came to unite all men in brotherhood, — that he utterly reprobates the passion for power, through which the few have always trodden on the many, — that his religion is the peaceful remedy for all oppression, and that, even where it does not break the yoke, it can give to the oppressed dignity and peace?

"Christianity — not as taught by the state, but as taught by its founder — is eminently the friend of the multitude, — their charter, their emancipator, as well as the foundation of immortal hope. I do not wonder at the existence of skepticism among the Chartists; but it is a mournful and discouraging fact, and, to my mind, one of the saddest effects of the unnatural social system which crushes them. I know, however, that the evil is but a temporary one. Some reformer who will comprehend the liberal, enlarged spirit of Christianity, and utter it in words of fire, may, at any moment, spring up amongst them. If not, time, experience, and the good providence of God, will work their deliverance."

"*August* 29, 1841.* Your connection with the government has led me to feel that perhaps I might do some good by giving you the views of affairs taken by a friend of humanity at a distance. I regret much the defeat of the ministry. I subscribe to what you say of their merits, though I doubt whether to call them 'friends of peace.' They have seemed to show no backwardness to fight, and many in this country think that hostilities between England and America are less probable since the accession of the Tories to power.

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* To Thomas Thornely, Esq.

"On this subject I have much solicitude. Not only on general grounds, but as a patriot, I dread the excitement of a military spirit in this country. Our boundless energy is now poured forth in new settlements, internal improvement, &c. Let it take the direction of war, and I know not where it will stop. I fear that your ministry was deficient in one part of their policy towards this continent. I took it for granted, that, in recognizing the independence of Texas, England would make stipulations in favor of the integrity of Mexico. This the security of her own colonial possessions demands, and nothing else can prevent the indefinite extension of slavery southward. But in what has transpired I see no sign of any such stipulation. Had I access to the Tory administration, I should rejoice to turn its attention to this object. I hardly know any political arrangement in which the interests of humanity are more concerned. Do think of the matter.

"Your explanations of the success of the Tories are, I doubt not, just; but I should ascribe much to the position of the ministry, which kept them in perpetual check, and compelled them so to modify measures as to give little satisfaction to many of their party. An administration so hemmed in can do nothing to excite enthusiasm. It must look to the cool good-sense of the people for support; and this is not eminently the virtue of the people. Besides, the opinions and feelings of a great mass of the Liberals outstripped those of the ministry, and men are particularly prone to be offended with those of their own side who fall behind them in zeal, — to call them traitors to the cause, &c. It is a fact, too, that men are apt to grow tired of old things, not excepting old friends, and lukewarmness is sometimes more fatal than hostility.

"I lament the change greatly, because my sympathies are with the people and with the lowest and most suffering among them; and I know that the Tories think more of their order than of the people. They will be liberal, I doubt not, to the very utmost which the interests of their order will allow; but they have no hearty concern for the progress and elevation of the people. They will establish a system of education, but so as to enslave the minds of the multitude. Aristocracy and a true humanity are irreconcilable. There may be much kindness towards the lower orders, but no respect for them as MEN, as essentially equal by the participation of God's image. *Humanity* they cannot have. I rejoice in your views of free trade, and shall be glad to receive any communications from you on this point."

"*September* 26, 1841.* These general views give me great hope about England. When I think of the great amount of intellect, good principle, benevolence, power, wealth, among you, I feel as if you must work your way through your difficulties. *How*, I know not; for I am too far off, and perhaps were I on the spot I should be as much perplexed; but one thing I know, — that there was never before, in an equal space, such an amount of good influences as in England; never so many people interested in upholding order; never so many clear thinkers. Out of all this something must grow. I have great faith, too, in our Anglo-Saxon blood. We Anglo-Saxons have much that is bad in us. I doubt whether, through this race, the world is to be saved; but for practical energy, for skill in surmounting difficulties, for richness of resource, we are unrivalled. That England, with her immense wealth and with half the world under her sway, should sink under her present difficulties, I cannot believe. We Americans should solve the problem somehow or other, and you are not behind us.

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* To Miss Harriet Martineau.

"In the mean time there must be much suffering. I dread outbreaks, which cannot but be put down, and which, if successful, would bring no relief. The poor — of whom I think more than of the rich — seem to have no hope. The organized force of the government and the richer classes is irresistible, and as soon as the poor threaten tumult, the middle classes will forsake them. They have no helpers. I fear that the worst evil in your country is the want of sympathy in your various classes. You are not one people. The horrible spirit of aristocracy spreading through the whole society prevents fusion, sympathy, brotherhood. Such is the account given me by recent visitors to England. A crash, which might break down your partitions and humanize you, might do you good. But who of us, with our narrow vision, would counsel or administer so fearful a remedy? Do keep me apprised of your state, for I have great interest in your country."

"*September* 28, 1841.* The great interest I feel in the preservation of peace between our countries leads me to write you a very hasty line.

"You know I have felt that it was almost incredible our countries should incur the guilt and miseries of war with comparatively no cause; and I am sure of the peaceful disposition between the governments. But among our people, there is a fear, a growing spirit of alienation, in regard to England. A friend who has spent two or three months in

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* To Thomas Thornely, Esq.

Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont, and arrived here yesterday, tells me he found much exasperation there ; and, from the nature of the case, it must increase until the difficulties are healed. On a vast extent of frontier, most of it a wilderness, there can be no repression of violations of neutrality, and the people of both countries are agitated by each new hostile act. Last evening's paper contains a proclamation of President Tyler against secret lodges, clubs, associations, on our northern frontier, bound by oaths, &c., and organized for the purpose of lawless incursions into Canada. The same paper describes a great agitation in Vermont, excited by the invasion of our territory by soldiers from Canada, who seized a fugitive from Canada. This will of course provoke reprisals. The amount of the whole is, that the difficulties should be settled immediately. If not, repeated violences on both sides may produce the result which every good man must dread. All that government can do to avert the evil will be done ; but government is very limited in this case.

"The opinion here is, that England postpones a settlement from an unwillingness to make a just arrangement of the boundary question. On that question there is but one opinion in the country. Our calmest, wisest, most impartial men treat the late report of your commissioners as beneath contempt. Mr. Adams lately said in Congress, that we ought to give up McLeod, for there we were wrong, and we had a case to settle in which we were *undoubtedly right*, and in which our claims must not be prejudiced by a false step in another case. The Democratic party has triumphed in Maine, which is not a good omen. Our people do not anticipate so much evil from a war as you would imagine. The seaboard might be ravaged, but the population in our seaports is a mere handful. Our manufacturing interests would thrive, and the country, it is said, would become wholly independent of the manufactures of Great Britain.

The agricultural interest, so vastly predominant, can have no great apprehensions.

"I write in too much haste to review what I have written, but within two days I have learned more than before of the feelings of a portion of our community. That war is possible, I am still unwilling to admit; but a hostile spirit in a people is a bad sign, and I wish the two governments to feel the need of instant action. McLeod's case is to be decided immediately. I hope he is not to suffer from the vengeance of the 'Patriots,' who will not lose sight of him if released."

"*Boston*, December 31, 1841.* The last two steam-packets from Liverpool have confirmed your accounts of the pacific disposition of your country towards the United States, and the war-fever has sensibly abated here. A recent transaction has, however, awakened some feeling at the South. I refer to the case of the Creole, a vessel employed in transporting slaves from Virginia to New Orleans, of which the slaves got possession after a conflict in which they killed one or two men. They then compelled the crew to carry them to New Providence, where those of their number, about nineteen, who were concerned in the killing, were imprisoned, and the rest, above a hundred, were, notwithstanding the remonstrances of our consul, left to go free. This affair has stirred up the South to much angry menace, and one member of Congress has been foolish enough to talk of a retaliatory assault on New Providence.

"I trust that England will use this opportunity to prove her immovable fidelity to the principles of justice and humanity which she has espoused. You have declared that whoever puts foot on your soil is free, — that the State shall not exert its power to sustain the claims of the slaveholder,

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* To Thomas Thornely, Esq.

— that you will not create slavery by sending back those who have escaped from it. I am deeply humbled when I think of my country as arrayed against these principles. You cannot waver. Lord Morpeth, talking to me of this affair, said, — 'I would sooner give up Canada than give up a slave!' As I heard him, I felt that England had something to boast of. Would to God that all your policy were as just and liberal as that which you have adopted towards the enslaved and towards Africa! I should then be almost tempted to forsake my own country, that I might live under the empire of justice and freedom. But humanity has charges and complaints against England, as against America. I do not wonder that men who want faith in God look despondingly on human affairs everywhere. No nation can make high claims to respect.

"There are fears, I know not how just, that an attempt will be made, during this session of Congress, to annex Texas to our country. I have trusted that England will not look quietly on a movement of this kind, but that she will join with all the powers holding islands in the Gulf of Mexico in protesting against it.

"We hear much of the distress among the poorer classes of England, and, indeed, of general suffering among the industrious classes. Will not the effect be, to unite more closely those portions of society which suffer from unequal legislation, and which, for want of union, have failed to exert their just influence on government?"

"*January* 1, 1842.* Our accounts from your country are sad; but they encourage me to hope that the violences and outbreaks which you apprehended will not take place. In truth, all that we hear leads us to think that Tory ascendency is not soon or easily to be overturned, whether by violent or regular means. The history of the country since the Reform bill seems to have brought out more clearly than before the strength of the aristocratic principle among you. The privileged classes hold you in their hands, and have no thought of releasing their grasp. I have heard of late more than before of the want of union among those classes in your country which suffer from unequal legislation. The poor Chartists find little sympathy among the middle classes, and in these classes there is a want of fusion. Your different bodies of Dissenters, who, one might think, would be forced together by the terrible pressure of the Establishment, stand apart and repel one another; and there is more intolerance among members of the same denomination than in this country. I have heard more of late of the want of a common heart in the mass of your people, and of petty jealousies of rank among those who should fight the battle of equality. Church and state, coronet and mitre, nobles and the priesthood, can unite firmly enough; but the people are broken. Such are accounts I have lately had from two intelligent travellers. How much to believe I know not, for travellers are poor authorities; but such impressions on wise observers have generally a foundation."

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* To Miss Harriet Martineau.

1842.* "It gives the enlightened part of our community much pleasure to observe of late in the English press a disposition to be more just to our country; not that our appetite for praise is very craving, but because it seems important to us that nations between which such strong bonds of union subsist as between England and America, and to which the interests of freedom and reformed Christianity are specially confided by Providence, should not be alienated from each other by the aspersions of malignity and party spirit. A man who can visit this country, and not see in our institutions and manners the means of developing the noblest faculties and sentiments of human nature, must be incapable of just and high thinking; and I pity an American who can leave your shores without a grateful sense of the unparalleled services you have rendered to the cause of human improvement, and without rejoicing in the powerful springs of happiness and moral and intellectual progress which are in operation among you."

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* To Miss Jane E. Roscoe.

"*August* 10, 1842. I was gratified to learn that my remarks on the case of the Creole drew some attention in your country. I valued them, not as bearing on that particular case, but as giving a broader and juster exposition of the law of nations than statesmen are accustomed to take. I am always glad when I can attract the attention of the people to great principles by limiting them to matters of immediate and general interest; for in this way truth may be thrown into circulation, when, if given in an abstract form, it would awaken little interest. This has been one motive for writing so often on the subject of slavery.

"The great subject of political interest to me of late has been the negotiation between our governments. My first desire for my country at this moment is peace. Probably before my letter leaves these shores, the treaty between the two nations will have been submitted to the Senate. What its fate is to be seems doubtful. The hope is, that neither party will dare to assume the responsibility of rejecting it. Little faith can be placed on the virtue of either party, or rather of their leaders; but you may be sure that we shall not think of fighting very soon."

Dr. Channing's sympathies were nowise limited to England, warm as was his grateful reverence for the mother-land of the Anglo-Saxons, but cordially embraced all Continental Europe. Heart and hand he held himself pledged, as a faithful brother, to the great party of Liberalism spread throughout civilized nations, and his earnest prayer was for universal freedom by conservative reform, — if, indeed, peace could cure the corruptions of centuries. During the great crisis of 1830 he thus expressed his feelings.

"Amidst the stupendous events of our age, when the whole civilized word is heaving like an ocean, and the great question of human freedom is at issue, I see not how they who love their race can be indifferent. A great war is going on, that of opinions and principles, and we have too much reason to dread that this will bring on a war of arms and bloodshed. I have no fear as to the result, but I shudder at this means of gaining even the greatest good."

When the news, therefore, of the "Three Days" in Paris reached Newport, his heart leaped up within him in exulting hope; the era of emancipation he had so long been looking for, it seemed to him, had dawned; and he returned much earlier than usual to Boston, to exchange congratulations with the friends of constitutional liberty, and to pour out from his pulpit the bright anticipations with which his mind was crowded. To his sorrow, he found but slight response to his enthusiasm, and felt more deeply than ever before how benumbing to high honor and humanity is the heavy pressure of mercenariness. With some of his intimate friends, indeed, and especially with Charles Follen, he held earnest communion on the magnificent opportunity opened to the Continental nations; and his aspirations were constant, that France might be found worthy of her great vocation. The Revolution of 1830 appeared to him to be, in its principles, methods, aims, and especially in its pervading spirit, a great advance upon its predecessor; and he looked forward confidingly to the redeeming power which it was to exert upon Italy, Germany, and Poland. The reappearance of Lafayette, in so commanding a position, gratified him exceedingly; and the mingled firmness and calmness of the French people showed, he thought, a fine development of moral feeling and enlightened judgment. That the freemen of America, especially the young, should be so moderate in their expressions of joy, astonished him. He went back, in memory, to his boyish days, when the Cambridge collegians had processions, speeches, and bonfires. Now, all was still. One evening, during this period, a graduate called upon him. "Well, Mr. ——," said he, with an accent of sarcasm, which few, probably, ever heard from his lips, "are you, too, *so old* and *so wise*, like the young men at Harvard, as to have no foolish enthusiasm to throw away upon the heroes of the Polytechnic school?" "Sir," answered ——, "you seem to me to be the only young man I know." "Always young for liberty, I trust," replied Dr. Channing, with a bright smile, and a ringing tone, as he pressed him warmly by the hand.

Dr. Channing's sermons, at this period, were strongly tinged, through their whole course of thought, with fresh hopes for the elevation of the people. He sought to teach his hearers how to "honor all men,"* and to rouse them to a deeper interest in man as man. People complained of the present tameness of life, he taught, because they were indolent and worldly; but now as ever existence was rich with romantic interest, and heroes might to-day, as in past ages, renovate their race by embodying great principles in great actions. The age of chivalry might reappear in a far sublimer and purer form, and make these days splendid by a manifestation of loyalty, courage, energy, self-sacrifice, in industry, trade, and social intercourse. In a word, he seized the occasion to bring home to his fellow-men the possibility of conforming internal legislation, foreign politics, and all human relations to the heavenly model of Christian brotherhood.

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* Works, Vol. II., pp. 299 – 314.

Extracts from letters will indicate the just and liberal sympathy with which he watched the progress of the Continental nations of Europe.

"*Boston*, September 22, 1830. I am very much interested by the news from France. With many, many fears, I have more hopes, it seems to me, than any body."

"*March*, 1831. The religion of an absolute prince is almost as dangerous as irreligion. You see in Nicholas's proclamation, that he considers God as the guardian of legitimate kings, and the protector of Russia. He has thus contrived to throw a sanctity over his imagined rights, and, in the name of God, will drench Poland with blood. I have ceased, however, to talk more severely of kings than of subjects. The infelicity of their condition blinds them almost necessarily to the true relation which man bears to man. They are cut off from their race, made a kind of demigods in their own as well as others' eyes, and, of course, have no perception or feeling of the claims of humanity or of the rights of men. But that stern teacher, revolution, is giving other lessons which must be learnt, and which are so important as to reconcile me to a measure of suffering attending their inculcation."

"*August* 1, 1831. You have heard, I suppose, that the Poles have been unsuccessful in a battle with the Russians. Perhaps the right side will not prevail now, but it will by and by. We must never despair. I am waiting with great solicitude for the next news."

1832. "I inclose —— some money for the Poles. I grieve that I can do no more at present. My heart aches for these suffering patriots. We will try to aid them more by and by."

"*Boston*, December 8, 1832.* In regard to Poland, our distance from her and our inability to render her any physical aid have checked our sympathies. We have, however, one mode of aiding her, if we understood and would use it. The public opinion of nations is growing more and more powerful, and a general expression of horror from the civilized and Christian world would be heard and respected even at St. Petersburg. Is not the time coming when governments will solemnly protest against cruelty and oppression, wherever practised, and will feel themselves debtors to the cause of humanity as truly as individuals?"

"*Oakland*, July 21, 1835. I have been interested by the political views of your letters. You fear too much, I think, from the violent language used around you. I anticipate no immediate convulsion. War is a matter of much more calculation now than formerly. The great powers feel that a general war would put all their great interests to hazard, and might shake Europe to its centre. The newspapers give you little clue to the designs of cabinets. Every year of peace is a new pledge of its continuance; for the social improvements, which are going on so rapidly, would all be endangered by war, and are creating classes which have every motive for resisting it.

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* To Miss Jane E. Roscoe.

"I have an ever-deepening interest in the state of the world, and I have better hopes than most people. I see, however, many obstacles to the good cause of freedom and human improvement. Nothing discourages me more than the apparent want of principle in France. Could I see the spirit of religion and disinterested virtue springing up in that country, I should have no fears. Our country continues as when you left us, but now that you are on a larger stage of observation our party quarrels must seem less important to you. We expect peace with France, so that one cause of irritation is removed."

1835. "We have all been made happy, this week, by learning that we are to have no war with France. This war would have stirred up all my spirit. I could not have held my peace, had these countries, calling themselves civilized and Christian, begun the work of mutual destruction with no cause whatever."

"*April* 22, 1837.* Your observations on society in Germany satisfied me that the good work of improvement is going on. I should infer that you had found persons of rank more alive to their responsibilities more disposed to sympathize with their inferiors, than I have imagined. This I should rejoice in, even if it opposed my republican theories; but it does not. I cannot doubt that despotic institutions have been very much mitigated and improved by the existence of more liberal ones, just as Protestantism has reformed Catholicism. Nor do I believe that absolute princes and nobles are doing better from calculation merely, from the desire of securing their power by showing it to be beneficial. This, no doubt, has its influence; but from better principles they desire also to introduce into their own domains the improvements which are springing up elsewhere. It is one good fruit of the present free communication among nations, that nothing good can be shut up. I shall not be surprised to learn that there is even more virtue and happiness in some parts of Europe than here. . . . . .

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* To George Ticknor, Esq.

"Your letter delighted me by the accounts you gave me of the condition of the lowest class in some parts of Germany, and of the results of efforts for juvenile reformation. I beg you to keep these objects steadily in view. Your work is to serve your country by spreading among us a knowledge of what is done for the elevation of men elsewhere. The ignorance here on such matters is wonderful, and confined to no class; there are philanthropic spirits prepared to carry out any great ideas."

"*October* 25, 1840.* The excitement of a war spirit in France is a bad omen. My hope has been, that that country would have peace long enough for the interweaving of commercial ties and material interests to such a degree as to counteract the insane passion for conquest and glory. Nor do I despair, though the sky is dark."

"*September* 10, 1841.† I have followed one rule in life,— to speak for myself, to avoid identifying myself with others, to take on myself the responsibility of my own views alone. Shall I by publishing in the —— be considered as fighting under any standard but my own? Unless the individual be made exclusively responsible, I cannot, indeed, think of writing; for I can say nothing on political subjects without showing my republican heart. I have of course thought much of the French Revolution. I look at it, I will not say in peculiar lights, but in a different way from the common one, and I think I should like to give in an article some juster views of it. In connection with this subject, my ethical, religious, — not sectarian, — as well as political views, would come out. I can do nothing unless I am free, — unless I can say what I think and feel in the language in which truth naturally clothes itself in my mind. The article, then, if I write it, will aim at no concealment, will not affect the style of a different country, but will be a simple, frank utterance to a free people of what a distant freeman thinks on the most pregnant, solemn portion of history.

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* To William Rathbone, Esq.

† To the Rev. James Martineau.

" I wish to give the impressions of a man who has *lived through the Revolution*, and to show how far our views and hopes of society ought to be modified by it. The enemies of reform use it as their chief weapon, and I think wrongfully. In pursuing the subject, I may find myself in an error, and shall, I trust, cheerfully accept the truth. No theory will blind me to the atrocities of the Revolution."

" *March* 1, 1842.* I beg you to continue your sketches of German character. I have much love for this people, without understanding them as well as I wish. I think of them as more genial, kindly, unconscious, single-hearted, and confiding, than we are. The grandest principle of our nature, the sense of the infinite, seems to be more developed in them, and their writings express a deeper consciousness, a keener perception of the unity of the universe. We in this country, perhaps, see the best of them, that is, we see men who have been obliged to leave their native land for their devotion to freedom and impatience of wrong. In these we see nothing of what is thought to be the defect of their country; I mean, want of decision, of energy, of will, the energy which realizes one's speculations and convictions as to the right, true, and good. Dr. Follen was distinguished by the heroic *will.* It is not easy to reconcile all we hear about the Germans. Most accounts make them more sensual than we are, and mournfully defective in purity. I hope you will continue your inquiries as to the last particular. Licentiousness seems to be the great stain on our civilization, and there can be nothing worse."

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* To George Combe, Esq.

Looking upon Christendom as a growing whole, where the vitality of every part reacts upon every other, and longing for the era of freedom and order made one by universal justice to all human interests, and to every individual, Dr. Channing was anxious that the United States should work out thoroughly the social problem assigned to her, and thus aid her sister nations upward to more friendly and honorable institutions. His thoughts in regard to the reciprocal influence of the Old World and the New are thus expressed.

"*October*, 1839.* You speak in your last of the increased connection between Europe and America. The great question I ask myself is, Which of the two continents will exert the greatest influence on the other? I suppose, at first, there will be an increase of the aristocratic spirit and feeling in our cities, which are already too much disposed to sympathize with the exclusives abroad. Our literature, too, in its state of childhood, may for a time be more dependent on foreign literature. The natural development of our institutions and national character will be more interfered with. Spiritual objects will, for a time, be more lost sight of. But I trust freedom is a mightier and more contagious principle than the opposite, and that, in the long run, its influence will be more felt. The present stage of civilization is a necessary one, and will follow its own course; but the very fact of its necessity gives me hope. I wish, indeed, to see some nobler aims, a higher direction of this newly developed activity. But the child grows strong in mind as well as body by acting on matter and seeking physical good, and the race may need the same discipline. We must try, that the Old World may hear some generous, inspiring tones from the New."

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* To Dr. Charles Follen.

Enthusiastic at once and patient, eager for progress, yet reverencing existing good, liberal in sympathy and cheering words to every method of reform, buoyant in hope amid all vicissitudes, fearing only the crippling influence of fear, trusting Providence perfectly, Dr. Channing looked steadily forward to the brightening future. The following letters will show how truly he described himself as "always young for liberty."

"*July* 28, 1839.* My faith in the progress of truth, humanity, and piety is in no degree shaken; but the state of the world joins with all history in showing me that the great designs of Providence unfold slowly, — that is, slowly to us, creatures of a day, — and that another, perhaps very distant, age is to witness that triumph of the spirit of Christianity which we expect. We all see that civil liberty has not produced that sudden melioration and exaltation of human nature which was confidently hoped; nor has religious liberty borne all the fruits we hoped. Still, a good work is going on. Slavery and bigotry and worldliness will not reign for ever."

"*Newport*, October 5, 1840.† I am glad when our good and wise men go abroad, as they must do something to bring on that blessed day when the friends of humanity and religion in all countries, forgetting all inferior distinctions, will unite in the work of recovering the world from error, misery, and sin."

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* To the Rev. Henry Channing.

† To Francis Wayland, D. D.

"*Boston*, October 24, 1840.* Mr. Robertson gave a noble character to the Westminster. What gratified me particularly in that work was its enlarged, candid, liberal tone of thought. It was just to conservatism, just to the past, — rare merits among us liberals. Perhaps we have been as bigoted as our opponents; nor is it to be wondered at. The terrible abuses of the past, contrasted with the bright hues which the imagination throws over the future, have naturally enough put us out of patience. But our faith in human nature should teach us that it cannot have existed so many ages without putting forth much that is glorious and worthy of grateful commemoration, and the law of progress teaches us that the seeds of something better are to be looked for in the past. I confess I need these lessons myself. I am so accustomed to measure what has been and is by the idea of the good, the perfect, which Christianity gives me, that a deep discontent gets possession of me, and I find no peace but in flying to brighter coming ages. I ought to be more just, and some articles in the Westminster have helped me in this particular. I do not mean that this is its only merit; but in this way it has done much for the liberal cause; for nothing serves a cause more than to give a large wisdom to its advocates.

"I desire much that there should be a powerful work among you, devoted to liberal principles. Are they not to pass through a severe trial? Are they not suffering the natural consequences of having promised much more than they have performed? Are they not suffering from the follies and vices of their professed friends? Is not conservatism more distrustful? Is there not a point at which commerce ceases to liberalize, and becomes a pillar of aristocracy? Is not the worldliness of this commercial age altogether irreconcilable with religious inquiry and a thirst for higher truth? And are there no signs of a wider prevalence of the principle of authority? . . . . . The conclusion is, that nothing can be done but by spreading large views, great truths, — by waking up in men some consciousness of what they were made for, and of the design of their union in society. How to lift their heads above the mist they now live in is the question. Much may be done by a truly good review. Amidst all apparent reactions, there is decided progress. . . . . . I wish I could promise something, but I am trying to give myself to the work for which I have been living all my life. Whether I shall do any thing I know not, for all efforts exhaust me; but I must cease from spending my strength in occasional labors. There are, however, one or two topics which I have long wanted to discuss. One is, the position of the present age, what place it holds in the world's history, what are its relations to the past and future, its work, its prospects. In other words, I would help the age to understand itself."

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* To Miss Harriet Martineau.

"*November* 30, 1840.* In this country and England the conservative tendency seems gaining strength, and yet in the changed tone of conservatism, even when it triumphs, you see a homage to a higher tendency. The elevation of the great body of the people cannot be winked out of sight, as formerly, and I trust the time is coming when all parties will be compelled to propose it distinctly."

"*September* 26, 1841.† I suppose I should pass for a wiser man, if I hoped less on most subjects. Wisdom is thought to be fearful, — an old woman with wrinkled, anxious brow. But under an empire of infinite goodness, it seems as rational to trust the signs of good as those of evil. I look more and more at the great laws of our own nature, and of universal nature, and I am sure these are working for glorious results. The present dark appearances may be traced very much to the increased activity of the human mind. Men see, think, inquire, want, claim, and therefore murmur more. They understand more their rights and wrongs, and are enlightened enough to trace to bad institutions what they used to refer to fixed laws of nature. In their greater activity, they run against one another. In such a state of things there must be much partial development, much half-truth, much conflict of the old and the new. But I am very slow to believe that the growth of men's powers is an evil, that they are to suffer ultimately from looking farther into things, from comprehending more what is due to them, from becoming more active and efficient."

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* To George Combe, Esq.

† To Miss Harriet Martineau.

"*August* 10, 1842. Happily, the outward striking events which alarm us are of little importance, compared with the silent changes which are going on in society, in its modes of thought, of industry, of education, of intercourse, — changes which often escape our observation, but which determine the coming ages. How little we understand our own times or their tendencies! My ignorance becomes hope under the perfect government of God."

CHAPTER VI.

FRIENDS.

Friendship reveals its perfect form, and puts forth its richest bloom and fruit, only where universal philanthropy and cordial private attachments blend in one person. This rare union was beautifully manifested in Dr. Channing. We have seen how diffusive was his humanity, and with what unmeasured sympathy he joined hands in the wide circle of mankind, interlinked the earth round through the ages. We are now to see the truth and tenderness of his affection in intimate relations. To a degree which is uncommon in days so anxious, restless, and fluent as our own, he kept firm and fresh the friendships of his youth and early manhood.

Dr. Tuckerman was once asked whether he knew Dr. Channing. "Know him!" he replied; "he, Mr. Phillips, and I are like three spirits in one." And each of the friends referred to would have described, in equally strong terms, the nearness of their communion. Classmates in college, and in the opening years of mature life settled in one neighbourhood, attraction and accident had most closely intertwined their thoughts, feelings, and actions. In their characters, pursuits, conditions, there was just that proportion of affinity and contrast which produces full accord. Of his cordial reverence for each of those chosen companions Dr.

Channing has fortunately left memorials which will unite their names and images indissolubly.* But this biography would be imperfect without bearing on its pages some bright token of the relation which did so much to confirm and fulfil their varied virtues.

Of Mr. Phillips, Dr. Channing once wrote to an acquaintance: — "He is one of the intuitive men, whom I take delight in much more than in the merely logical. In truth, he is a remarkable man, an earnest lover of his fellow-creatures and possessed with an invincible trust in their progress, an enlightened and fervent friend of liberty, undiscouraged by the dark omens which are the trials of human faith, and deeply interested in whatever affects the rights and improvement of the great body of the people. That noble intellect was made for a world of light, that noble heart for a society of truth and honor, in which it might expand joyfully and freely." Regard for the delicacy of the living prevents a due expression here of respect for one to whose powers of original suggestion, discriminating judgment, and spiritual aspiration Dr. Channing felt himself ever newly indebted; and even that friend might find it difficult, in words, to do justice to the sweetness, constancy, depth, of the love which he returned. It is enough to say, that, through long years of active and declining life, they were mutually replenished and refreshed.

To Dr. Tuckerman, Dr. Channing thus expresses his warm affection: — "Your friendship is among my greatest blessings, — I was about to say earthly blessings; but Christian friendship is of heaven"; and the following extracts will show how faithfully fulfilled the duties growing out of such intimacy. They are from a letter addressed to Dr. Tuckerman on the occasion of his return from Europe.

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* Works, Vol. V., pp. 101, 102; Vol. VI., pp. 93–137.

"*Newport*, July 21, 1834. My dear brother,—I received your line from the steamboat last evening, and take the first opportunity to congratulate you on your safe and happy return. I thank God that he has preserved you and preserved to you friends so dear. I trust you will have cause to rejoice for ever in your late absence. It has opened to you new scenes, new views, brought you into connection with very many interesting, excellent, enlightened persons, given a new spring to your faculties and affections, and now you have come to do good.

"I was glad that you told me that you felt the necessity of 'being wise'; for I should have opened on you my exhortations, perhaps, with those very words. Your usefulness, at this moment, is dependent on your wisdom. You have returned with some accessions to your natural ardor, and there are but few prepared to sympathize with you in some of your most interesting views. You understand the great subjects which have occupied you better than any body, and will naturally feel pained by the ignorance and indifference which will meet you at every step. But the ignorant and indifferent are to be won, not forced. Strive, then, to unite unaffected humility and just deference to others with benevolent zeal, moral independence, and fidelity to your deliberate and solemn convictions. Will you say, 'How easy to counsel'? Not so. I am not given to advising, and nothing but my earnest solicitude for your usefulness would lead me to take on me this office at a moment when my heart prompts me to express only sincere joy and gratitude.

"I thank God that he has restored you, not only to your family, but to me. I have wanted you, missed you, and feel as if one of my best blessings were brought back to me. How many questions I have to ask! We cannot talk ourselves out very soon. News will form but a small part of our communications. We shall go over the old ground of social reforms with new lights. I fear you will not give full credit to my humility, when I say, that I shall be glad to have my oracle put to silence by the more celestial responses of its neighbour. Your sincere friend."

The hearts, minds, homes, of these three friends were freely open to one another; they were, in the best sense of the words, each other's father-confessors; their spiritual wealth was in common, they were truly one.

To this trio was added, in later years, Charles Follen, — dear to each, but bound to Dr. Channing by ties of peculiar nearness. Of this honored man, also, his friend has left an imperishable monument.* But a record of his regard should appear here. In a letter to Dr. Follen, he wrote: —

"There are few with whom I feel myself so strongly united, and the years are fast flying in which I can enjoy such friendships on earth. But we cannot dispose of ourselves here. We will cherish unity of spirit; and this will secure a meeting at last."

And immediately after Dr. Follen's death he thus manifested the sense of his own loss.

"*February* 1, 1841. My sensibilities have been drawn on a good deal of late. You have heard of the death of ——, an almost overwhelming blow to us all, which I was summoned to mitigate by sympathy and spiritual counsels. Then came the burning of the Lexington; and that called me to weep, not for others only, but for myself. The loss of Dr. Follen is, indeed, one of the greatest bereavements of my life. In his case, I had found that spiritual ties may be as strong as those of nature. He was one of the few men who won my heart and confidence at first. I saw almost intuitively that he was a true man, — that he had an unconquerable force of soul joined with the sweetest affections, — that he was not the slave of opinions or circumstances, but that he obeyed freely a divine law in his own soul. He has done me good."

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* Works, Vol. V., pp. 248-259.

Finally, after reading the beautiful life, in which, with such transparent truth and depth and delicacy of natural feeling, the magnanimous character of Charles Follen is revealed, Dr. Channing paid this tribute of unreserved admiration to his memory.

" *Germantown*, May 11, 1842. I received your letter, by a singular coincidence, just as I was finishing the reading of your biography. . . . . . It brings before me, in the colors of truth and nature, the friend whom I honored and loved above most friends. It gives to the world one bright proof more of the reality, beauty, and grandeur of disinterested virtue. Such sweetness and such nobleness have seldom been joined. . . . . . Such a history, indeed, awakens self-reproach. I feel myself in the presence of supreme virtue. I feel how little I have sacrificed, in comparison, to truth, freedom, the cause of humanity. But I rejoice that humanity has found more fervent friends, and they speak to me from a better world, I hope not in vain."

With numerous other friends among his peers in age, and among those younger as well as older than himself, Dr. Channing was united by cordial confidence. Absorbed in subjects of profound interest, both speculative and practical, naturally diffident, refined even to fastidiousness in his tastes, quickly appreciating all forms of character, and keenly sensitive to the morbid feelings by which untuned spirits communicate their discord even to one who has attained to unity, he was yet so tender, generous, tolerant, thoughtful, conscientious, and full of respect and hope, that, though by no means social, he yet found continually enlarging round him the circle of those to whom he was closely knit by honor, mutual trust, and warm affection. Many, whom his reserve at first repelled, became the most devotedly attached to him as acquaintance revealed to their observation his traits of justice, magnanimity, and unwavering disinterestedness. Especially with women of high and enlarged tempers, whose minds were trained by study and experience, did he joyfully feel himself at home. To them he could freely unveil his native enthusiasm, his fine perceptions of order and fitness, his love of beauty in nature and art, his romantic longings for a pure-toned society, his hopes of humanity made glorious by heavenly virtue. And his profound reverence for woman's nature and function gave that charm of unaffected courtesy to his manner, look, and tone, which won them liberally to exchange their cherished thoughts, as with an equal. It was in these friendships with women, therefore, that many of his brightest hours were passed. Full extracts from his correspondence will best show the richness of his sympathies. They may be thus suitably introduced.

"I send a line, — only a line, — that you may have a visible token of remembrance. Our frail nature, I know, likes this; and yet you need it not. You mingle much with our thoughts, and still more, when not thought of, you are with us. Do you not know what it is to have a kind of latent remembrance of friends, even when they are not directly present to the mind? We have a secret consciousness of their existence, which makes the world a brighter spot to us. A light comes from them, as from the sun, when other things are thought of."

"*Jamaica Plain*, October 27, 1823. These are cheering views, but I feel how soon the sky may be overcast. I have been admonished — and I hope not altogether in vain — not to let my hopes wander in the future of this world, but to enjoy God's gifts gratefully while they are spared, and to prepare myself, by a continually strengthening trust and an habitual renunciation of my own will, for parting with what is most dear. My dear L., I shall rejoice to see you, and shall try to do so when the severity of winter is over. Life is too short for friends who love one another to postpone unnecessarily the happiness of meeting. To survivors, there is great pleasure in recollecting affectionate intercourse with the friends who are gone. This week I expect my family from Newport. I have long been a solitary, and look forward to this as a great event."

"*October* 29, 1823. Yesterday I rode to ——, and found a deep sorrow, which, though ready to listen to the voice of religion, is unable to listen to any other voice. I am not pained, as I once was, to see the marks of an abiding grief; for most of our griefs wear out too fast, before they have fulfilled their purposes."

1823. "My dear Mrs. Kinder, — An opportunity offering for London, I cannot deny myself the pleasure of expressing to you and Mr. Kinder the grateful sense Mrs. Channing and myself retain of your kindness, and the satisfaction with which we remember our short intercourse with your family. Great as has been the happiness of our return, — and it has been inexpressible, — we have not forgotten the friends whom we have left; and our chief regret, on recalling your interesting country, is, that we wanted time to avail ourselves more of the hospitality which was offered us. England, perhaps you know, has sometimes been accused of receiving strangers coldly; and it would not be wonderful, if a stranger's claims were sometimes neglected, amidst the endless and conflicting demands made on the time of an inhabitant of London. But it was our happiness to meet, not only attention, but offices of kindness and friendship, which, unless we were deceived by our vanity, came from the heart, and certainly appealed strongly to our hearts. I recollect with much pleasure the visit which we paid with you to Mrs. Barbauld. It is rare to meet with such sensibility, mildness, and I may say sweetness, united with the venerableness of age, and I was particularly gratified with seeing in a woman so justly distinguished such entire absence of the consciousness of authorship. I trust that she is still living, for her life seemed to me a blessing, both to herself and her friends, and if so, I beg you to assure her of our affectionate and very respectful remembrance."

"*December* 23, 1823.* My dear Sir, — I was not permitted to be present at your ordination; but you have few friends who desire more earnestly your usefulness and happiness. Some of us would have disposed of you differently, but I trust that you will see in the present life, what you assuredly will in the future, that the disposal of Providence is the wisest and best. You have formed a relation which will

* To Rev. Orville Dewey.

bring you many pleasures and pains, in which you will receive testimonies of affection, and see fruits of your labor exceedingly touching and exhilarating, mixed with much to discourage and depress you. There is, perhaps, no condition in life which causes greater alternations of feeling. The very excellence of our religion, its unspeakable importance, which makes the dispensation of it so high and honorable an employment, naturally produces a frequent consciousness of deficiency, culpable unconcern, and disproportioned exertions; and the many appearances of fruitless labor sometimes join with recollections of inexcusable negligence to sink the mind into a despondence almost amounting to hopelessness. I feel as if your nature would expose you to this severe trial, and I pray God that your burden may be lightened by the conscientiousness with which you discharge your duties, and by greater success than is ordinarily enjoyed. I feel that I ought to cheer you at the beginning of your work, by telling you that your labors here have not been in vain. I remain your sincere friend."

"*July*, 1824. A mother, that earliest, most constant, most unfailing friend, whose kindness, beginning with our breath, blends with and forms a part of our whole history, ought not to go down to the grave without leaving the feeling of a melancholy void. I do not think that we have on earth so striking an image of God's goodness as in a mother's love. A son feels its claims, but a daughter's domestic habits must give a peculiar strength to the filial sentiment. You have reason to be grateful to God that you were strengthened and had opportunity to contribute so much to your mother's comfort, — that all which filial love could do to soften life's descent was done. You could not save from death, but you are not to feel as if your efforts were therefore ineffectual. There is a silent, soothing power in the tones, looks, and affectionate offices of beloved children;

and that parent is favored whose sick and dying bed is surrounded by such.

“ This event, though it has taken place in what is called the order of nature, is not the less, on that account, the appointment of God, and in the light of true wisdom it is one of the kindest appointments. The removal of near household friends, as it makes the greatest change in our condition, is meant to work the greatest change in our minds and characters. God intends that the heart softened by grief should receive deeper impressions, and that life, by putting on a more solemn aspect, should be viewed by us more wisely in its vast bearings and consequences. Who of us is not conscious of great defects of character, especially of deficiency in piety, in just regards to God? Affliction is intended to carry religion from the exterior into the depths and inmost recesses of the heart, to convert belief into a living persuasion, to raise prayer from a form into a spiritual communion, to change the invisible world from a dim shadow into a substantial and glorious reality. In this process the redemption of the soul consists, and this is the noblest work which God is carrying on upon earth, and although secret and silent, it will one day be seen to transcend in excellence and beneficence any or all of men's tumultuous labors. The fitness of sufferings to this end we all acknowledge. One would think, that, if any thing could take the mind from transitory and gross interests, and form it to noble habits of thought and feeling, — could turn its earnest attention on the future world and instruct it in its relations to the unseen Disposer of events and in its need of an Almighty Father, — it would be the removal of friends from this into another and invisible existence; and it is one of the melancholy views of society, that so many are not more effectually taught by this impressive dispensation.”

"*Boston*, July 7, 1824.* Were not the associations so serious, the vanity of your sex might be gratified by thinking that the actual deity of a large part of the Catholic world is a woman, 'the blessed Mary,' and that among Protestants no human being receives a homage so nearly approaching worship as Mother Anne from the Shakers. Are these facts to be explained by the desire which our weak, suffering nature has for a parental deity, and by the more intense, lovely, and touching exhibition of parental love in woman than in man?"

"*July* 19, 1824. I suppose you have heard that —— has succeeded in finding that great comfort of life, a good house, sufficiently spacious, and pleasantly situated. I always think that a woman looks on such a house with something of the feeling with which a sovereign surveys his empire, and not without some reason, for within that little province, home, her power is as absolute, and its order and happiness are even more dependent on her wisdom and virtue. A house is a mirror of a woman's mind, and it is natural that she should desire one in which the presiding genius may be seen to some advantage."

"*Portsmouth*, *R. I.*, July 14, 1825. Your letter began in a style to put me in the best humor. You compliment me on my letters. This reminded me of some compliments I lately received on my horsemanship. Flattery is never so sweet as when it gives us confidence in the possession of qualities in which we fail most, or at least about which we doubt most. Of my deficiencies in letter-writing I have hardly any doubt. My difficulty is, that I cannot start a subject without clinging to it, and I am very apt to run it down. The excellence of letter-writing, as of conversation, is thought to consist in a free and rather desultory movement of mind, in easy transitions and graceful allusions, in flitting from subject to subject, and in sportively connecting remote topics by means of slight and delicate resemblances. In these lighter graces of writing and conversation I fear I am sadly wanting, nor does the want seem to me of little importance. To be agreeable is not the most ineffectual means of being useful, and the beauty of the mind and character appears chiefly in the union of qualities which seem almost at variance with each other."

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* To the Misses Roscoe.

"*Boston*, October 28, 1825.* May it not be one of the recompenses and joys of good men after death, to know the influence of their characters and lives on those whom they left behind? And if so, I am sure the benevolent spirit, of which you have given us an affecting record, must derive from this world a happiness not unworthy of heaven. It is rare to meet with the union of so much sensibility with such innocence and freedom from all excess, as in Mr. Goodier. He belonged to that small class which we call faultless; and his blamelessness was not owing to a want of ardor or a natural moderation of desire which supplied the place of self-government. There is a character of truth and reality in his expressions of religious feeling, of which we feel the need in those forced and feverish 'experiences' which form the staple of religious biography."

"*October* 29, 1825.† We can never forget England. Our attention is drawn to it perpetually, by the works of genius, the useful inventions, and the charitable institutions, which make it the benefactor of the world. But when we think of your country, our thoughts are not engrossed by public objects. There are household scenes, hospitable dwellings, kind friends, to which we turn with a tenderer interest, and mourn amidst our happiness that we are separated from them by an ocean."

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* To Miss Jane E. Roscoe.

† To Mrs. L. Kinder.

"*Boston*, January 25, 1825. Why is it that we are so busy with the future? It is not *our* province; and is there not a criminal interference with *Him* to whom it belongs, in our feverish, anxious attempts to dispose of it, and in filling it up with shadows of good and evil shaped by our wild imaginations? To do God's will as fast as it is made known to us, to inquire hourly, I had almost said each moment, what he requires of us, and to leave ourselves, our friends, and every interest, at his control, with a cheerful trust that the path which he marks out leads to our perfection and to himself,—this is at once our duty and happiness; and why will we not walk in the plain, simple way?"

"*September* 2, 1826. So it is, that we sometimes seem to enter, in the short space of one or two hours, one cloud after another, until the earth seems a dark place. When I kneeled yesterday by the side of ——, and looked on her distressed countenance, and recollected, that, after the death of ten children, she was called to sit by a dying husband, and to think of a son about to embark to make the ocean his tomb, I felt that life had deep, deep griefs. But I was enabled to say, in the language of unaffected confidence, 'Trust, trust in God,' and to feel that there was Almighty paternal goodness, which could convert even this sorrow into good. From these scenes I passed into houses of prosperity and peace, and I found, that, through the buoyancy, I hope not the insensibility, of my nature, I could look on the world as a good world, and be grateful for existence here. Such scenes, however, though they leave no settled gloom, all go to confirm my sense of the uncertainty and insufficiency of this life. All the gay dreams of my youth as to a paradise on earth have fled, and yet life is more interesting than ever, and happier, for it receives a light from above."

"I have hitherto expressed only solicitude about the health of the body, but I need not add my earnest desire that a healing and purifying power may visit the mind. Indisposition seems to promise less of spiritual good, when it has a tendency to take away the usual control over thought and feeling. But the character may be aided by remedies and a discipline which we should not have chosen for ourselves. Our souls are dearer to their Author than to ourselves; and, by processes which we do not understand, he can awaken their power, touch their secret springs, give new sensibilities, weaken old habits and impressions, and recruit our moral and spiritual energy. We have only to trust, to be patient, to pray, and to do his will, according to our present light and strength, and the growth of the soul will go on. The plant grows in the mist and under clouds as truly as under sunshine. So does the heavenly principle within."

"*Portsmouth, R. I.*, June 26, 1828. I have no disposition to censure a deep sorrow, under such a bereavement as yours. To me there is something sacred in our natural affections, and especially in parental love. A mother's heart was made to love intensely, and when its cherished object is taken away, must it not, ought it not to, weep? Christianity does not quench the sentiments of nature, does not harden the heart as a means of purifying it, does not make our children less dear. No; it gives new claims and a new loveliness to the infant, sheds over it a mysterious light and glory, impresses on it a divine signature, recommends it to our love as an immortal child of God. The excellence of our religion is, that it calls forth towards our children stronger and purer affection, and still fortifies us to resign them. You have no reason to think that you loved your child too well. Probably you did not love it as wisely and with as holy a love as a Christian parent should have done. Here is our error.

"I observe that you have doubts as to the way in which you ought to view your affliction. You say you cannot regard it as a punishment; nor ought you, if your ideas of punishment are just; for by this you seem to understand sufferings inflicted in anger, and inflicted for particular sins or failures in duty. Such punishment does not, I think, enter into God's government. Still, it may be said with great truth, that God afflicts us for our sins; and this view is not to be lost sight of in our times of trial. The great cause of the appointment of human suffering is human guilt. We are an erring race, and need chastening to restrain, warm, soften, and humble us."

"*July* 7, 1828. You seem to be subject to an impulse which you cannot resist. Happily, it is a good one; but this circumstance does not reconcile me to the want of self-direction. There is such a thing as being slaves to our own *past good impressions*. I think perfection lies in a *present power* over ourselves, in a superiority to what is good as well as evil in our past course, in acting from a fresh present energy. Few of us attain this. Most good men turn their benevolent objects into hobby-horses, and ride them most furiously, or rather are hurried on by them passively, unresistingly. Such is the weakness of our nature. Our tendency is to slavery. The difference is, that some are the slaves of good, others of bad impulses. That blessed freedom in which we govern ourselves according to our ever-improving and daily changing perceptions of right is an eminence to which we slowly rise. I am too far from it, myself, to reprove others who fall short of it."

"*Boston*, November 30, 1828.* I had heard, before receiving your letter, of your father's indisposition, and have received frequent accounts of his state of health. Do assure him of my affectionate and respectful remembrances. I can well understand the greatness of his literary privations. But philanthropy sustained by religion is a more durable and a nobler excitement than literature, and furnishes the mind and heart with more unfailing objects of interest; and I know that your father has this spring of consolation and joy. He has not, indeed, succeeded in some plans of reform very dear to him. But his labors will not be lost. It is no small thing to set minds to work on great subjects; and of one thing I am more and more satisfied, that liberal and philanthropic principles are not advancing less surely because they make their way slowly. At least, I see them often suffering by men's acting upon them precipitately, or without a sufficient comprehension of their nature and bearings."

"*September* 9, 1829.† I was very much gratified by your account of your father's pursuits, and of the serenity of his mind under so much infirmity of body. What a delightful and encouraging example of the power of moral and intellectual culture, of piety, philanthropy, and of sensibility to the good and beautiful, over what are called the evils of life! I rejoice with him in the recent triumphs of tolerant and liberal principles. Assure him of my affectionate respect."

"*Boston*, November 26, 1829.‡ Could you look into my mind, you would never begin another letter with fears of making undue exactions on my time. My English friends do not know the impressions I brought from their country. The voice of kindness in a foreign land came to my heart with a strange power. The houses where I met a true welcome are now present to my mind, present when palaces and a thousand shows have passed away."

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* To Miss Jane E. Roscoe, Liverpool. † To the same.

‡ To Mrs. L. Kinder.

"*January* 22, 1830. The office to which your letter calls me, of ministering to a mind diseased, is, you well know, one of the most difficult, because physical maladies almost always have a large share in mental ones, and because inward suffering so often springs from an individuality, a peculiarity of mind, which another cannot easily comprehend. I think, however, that the desolateness, the sinking of soul, which you describe, is sufficiently common to be in some sense understood. Shall I tell you that I have felt it, that I have walked through thicker darkness, that I have known what loneliness of heart is? I say this that I may not be thought a stranger to the hidden woe which I desire to assuage. I believe, in this desolation which you so affectingly reveal, a self-sustaining, self-resisting power must spring up in our own breasts. No foreign agency can do for us what we need. Sympathy, tenderness, unless singularly wise, may only debilitate us. An energy must be put forth within. We must rely on our own resources.

"Perhaps you may say, that weakness is the very malady of the soul, and how is this to be withstood by an inward force? I answer, that the weakness is apparent rather than real, that there is an inexhaustible power within us, that the very frame of mind which you describe carries with it marks of strength. When I see a mind thirsting for objects of affection, on whom to pour forth an intense love, and from whom to receive a like love in return, I discern in this an exalted nature, a spirit meant to extend itself for ever, to know and love God, and to love more and more what is good and beautiful in his universe. What now does this mind need? It needs to know itself, to be just to itself, to reverence itself, to feel that it has capacities of affection which cannot fail to bring it an infinite good, unless wasted and perverted by its own errors.

"If I were called to give counsel to a susceptible and highly gifted woman, wounded in her tenderest affection and ready to despond, I should say, Understand and honor yourself. Feel that you have within you a spirit too divine ever to be given up in despair, or to be sacrified to any earthly disappointment. Feel how unjust you are to yourself in suffering any human being to arrest in its progress such a mind as yours. Remember that you were made to love infinitely and to love for ever, and let no ill-requited affection shut up this unfathomed fountain.

"It may be your lot to suffer through your whole present being; but be conscientiously faithful to the duties of a suffering state, and you will every moment strengthen the ties which bind you to the Infinite Parent, to his glorious spiritual family, and will hasten the period in which purer love, happier friendship, than we can know here will be yours. I would not repress your desire of death. I know no privilege so great as that of dying; but it is a privilege to those in whom evil is more and more subdued, and who go more and more beyond themselves. This disinterested, self-sacrificing philanthropy I should rejoice to awaken in you and in myself, a deeper consciousness of our own spiritual nature, more self-subsistence, a trust in the godlike principle within us which forms the very essence of our being, and in the infinite love of God to this ray of Divinity in his creatures. Nothing can injure us but unfaithfulness to ourselves, but the want of a just awe of our own minds. Through the want of this, we become slaves to circumstances and to fellow-beings. In cherishing it, I find myself strong and free."

"*Boston*, June 8, 1830.* When I read, as I too often do, dark descriptions of human life, I delight to think how many retreats of content and peace there are, such as you are sheltered in, which make no show to the traveller, but where a quiet joy springs up from the fountain of pure, deep love."

"*St. Croix*, January 5, 1831.† Your kindness follows me across the ocean. In truth, where has it not followed me since my first acquaintance with you? I bless that Providence which gave me early such a friend, and which has preserved you to me so long. Not a few in whose attachment I trusted have parted from me in the journey of life; and I say this with no disposition to censure, for a full share of the blame, where any existed, belonged probably to myself. But your affection has never faltered, has withstood all trials. I feel that it will never fail me on this side of the grave, and I trust it is to survive that change. I owe you much, and to such affection I am willing to owe much. In recollecting it, I have but one cause of pain, one which mixes with all my near relations and attachments, and that is, that I have not done more for those who are dear to me. My habits of mind abstract me too much from my friends. Perhaps I am improving in this particular."

"*St. Croix*, January 15, 1831. I am glad that you are so willing to place yourself in new situations. As soon as a young man gets moral power enough to withstand foreign impressions, and to refer what he sees and hears in the world to great principles, he cannot place himself in a better school than by entering a new state of society. His great principles will only be confirmed, while in many respects he will modify his old habits of thought and action, and form more generous sympathies and alliances with his race. . . . . .

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* To Mrs. M. A. Jevons, Liverpool.

† To Mrs. C. Codman.

"I wish you to gain the power of patient, continued, laborious thought. Truth, truth is of infinite price; as yet, we all hold it mixed up with deplorable error; and although a moral preparation for it is of primary importance, yet I expect little from this, unless joined with force and concentration of thought."

"*St. Croix*, March 12, 1831.* Your accounts of —— are the saddest I have received. I feel as if she were one of my family. And is one so blameless, so disinterested, so useful, so lovely, to be taken from us? I do hope that she is to be spared. I can slowly give up the excellent. What a loss she will be! It is a great happiness to me to believe that I have contributed something to the excellence of her character. She had a conversation with me, in which she was solicitous to express how much she felt herself indebted to me for whatever improvement she had made, and especially for her first deep impressions of religion. I doubt not her grateful spirit exaggerated the obligation; but to have done any thing to fit such a spirit for heaven is an inexpressible privilege. I did not imagine, till she told me, that my influence had been so happy.

"May I not hope, that, in other cases, I have done unknown good? This is one of the consolations of the Christian minister, when no striking visible effects follow his labors. He may have comforted sorrow of which he never dreamed, touched strings in the heart which have vibrated unheard, and pierced the conscience with salutary but unuttered pangs. In truth, all the friends of humanity and religion are probably instruments of greater good than they see, and the rewards of a future world may be the discovery of a beneficent influence which they exerted without suspecting it."

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* To Mrs. C. Codman.

"*St. Croix*, March 17, 1831. You seem to question the judgment of ——, perhaps correctly. It is not uncommon to find persons, who have the wisdom to understand and choose the supreme good, not equally wise in discerning the means, or in comprehending life and its affairs. Sometimes the very grandeur of their conceptions and aims seems to produce what the French call an 'exaltation' of mind, and to interfere with a calm, sober estimate of their own condition and duties, and of their fellow-beings.

"I am sorry to say that judgment is too often more conspicuous in those who choose low ends than in those who choose higher. I wish fervor of spirit and practical wisdom were oftener joined; but we have not advanced enough yet for this. I trust, however, that we do at the present day see a nearer approach towards the union of 'love and a sound mind,' of enthusiasm and calmness, than formerly."

"*St. Croix*, April 5, 1831. Could I hope that our future intercourse would be more useful, and that we might forward one another more towards our true happiness, our perfection, and immortal home, how bright would be the prospect! This may be; it should be. Yet when I consider how commonly the future is a repetition of the past, and what a shy, reserved race most of us are, I cannot say that my hope is strong. O, could I but perpetuate and carry into life some of the purposes, feelings, views, which at times fill my whole soul, when I seem to annihilate all the barriers between my own and other minds, how much happier and more useful should I be! Well, I will try.

"I have learned at least one lesson, not to despond. The future need not be a servile copy of the past. There is a power within us, and still more a power above us, through which we may overcome much, and ultimately overcome all things."

"*Boston*, June 15, 1831. I am not liable to melancholy;

but sometimes a sadness begins to creep over me, when I see those dearest to me holding life so loosely and reflect that I may survive them. This, however, is a passing cloud. I generally think with calmness how near we all are to another world, and have no solicitude but that we may accomplish faithfully our work on earth."

"*December* 25, 1831. May I here be allowed to refer to two highly valued and honored friends, who within a few days have been taken from us, and whose characters have helped to confirm to me these cheering views of the influence of Christ. These excellent women bore strongly on their characters the impress of Jesus. They became what they were under the influence of his spirit and virtue, and may therefore properly find a place in a discourse dedicated to the commemoration of his birth.

"The name of Miss Hannah Adams is familiar to you all, for her literary claims have been recognized abroad as well as at home. She worshipped with us until infirmity obliged her to deny herself the privilege of visiting the house of God, and considered herself to the last as connected with this congregation. Her heart was early touched by the religion of Christ, and it was her interest in this subject which guided all her literary labors. Her first work was 'A View or History of Religions'; and in conducting the difficult task of recording the variety of opinions and denominations to which Christianity has given birth, she showed how strongly the spirit of its great Founder had taken possession of her mind. In no instance has she breathed the slightest scorn or unkindness towards those who differed from her most widely, nor has any class of Christians complained of the least want of candor and uprightness in expounding their views.

"Her character was marked by the spirit of love. It was this which gave to her friends the chief interest in her character. Under the power of this principle, she looked on the creation of God with a delight almost peculiar to herself. I have never heard from human lips such sincere, unaffected, overflowing joy in the beautiful and beneficent works of God, as has broken from hers. This same love bound her by strong, indestructible bonds to those in whose character she saw the proofs of true goodness. Her admiration of virtue rose to enthusiasm. She had been distinguished by the kindness and friendship of one whom none can forget that ever saw him, — the late Mr. Buckminster, — and the tender, reverential feeling with which she clung to his memory was a delightful proof of the constancy of human affection. I believe that in no breast, beyond his immediate relatives, was his image so sacredly cherished as in hers.

"She was too sensible even to kindness, especially from those whom she honored. Her gratitude rushed forth as an overflowing stream, and could often find no utterance but in tears. The friends who visited her in her old age, and amidst her infirmities, especially her youthful friends, seemed to her ministering angels; and she would speak of their kindness to her with a brightness of countenance not unworthy of an angel. I doubt not that her nature was singularly susceptible; but it was the character of Christ which brought out this fine nature, and which aided her, in narrow circumstances, with poor health, with an irritable constitution, and a diffidence singularly trembling and shrinking, to maintain to the last hour this strength of love, and to devote herself to labors so useful to mankind.

"I pass now to another friend, who this last week has been taken from us; and, though I am not accustomed to speak in this place of my deceased parishioners who have lived and died in private walks, I may be permitted to speak one word of Mrs. Catherine Codman. When I look round in this congregation, how few do I see of those among whom I was first established as a minister! And now that friend is gone by whom for so many years my labors have been cheered, and requited by an affection which could not have been surpassed. She, too, bore the impress of her Saviour. She, too, was filled with his spirit of love. Her benevolence had no bound. Its error was, that it was prone to overflow the limits which Providence had assigned. To the sick, suffering, and poor, she was as a mother and friend. Her wealth she regarded as a trust for the destitute, her life was a ministry of kindness and mercy.

" But perhaps the most beautiful view of her character was the fulness with which her affection and love flowed forth towards all the diversities of sect, party, and denomination in the Christian world. She was of no sect. Her personal friends, her intimate friends, were found among all denominations. Goodness, wherever and in whatever form it was manifested, was an attraction she could not resist, and much of the happiness of her life was found in the quick and strong sympathy with the spirit and virtue of Christ manifested in those who widely differed on the disputable points of theology. Clouds of human infirmity may have passed over her pure and benevolent spirit, but they could dim only for a moment the brightness of her Christian virtue. That was an enduring light, and I trust it is shining now in its true home with unquenchable splendor."

" *Boston*, March 31, 1832.* I was particularly gratified by the lines entitled 'Christian Consolation.' Are you aware how little the source of consolation pointed out there is understood? That Christianity softens our private griefs by the sympathy with others which it inspires is one of the truths which need to be brought out more distinctly. The ordinary style of consolation is too selfish, and rather fitted to produce a feverish solicitude about our own future weal, and an unsocial religion, than to bind us more strongly to our fellow-creatures."

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* To Miss Jane E. Roscoe.

"*Boston*, November 11, 1832.* My dear Sir,—I received your letter by Dr. Spurzheim last summer. I am sorry that I must send you so sad a reply. Last night he died. The event can hardly shock you more than it has done us. His death has spread a general sorrow. Perhaps it is to be ascribed in part to the interest he awakened here. The kind reception which he and his lectures met with led him to overtask himself; he labored when he ought to have kept his room, and when at last he was confined, he unhappily chose to be his own physician, and refused to apply the remedies which his disease required. His disease was fever, which very soon produced wandering of mind. It must be consoling to his friends to know that he received every attention and enjoyed every accommodation. In truth, he could not have closed his days among a people more sensible of his worth. He had not only secured respect as a man of science, but endeared himself by his amiable manners, his philanthropy, and singleness of heart. The funeral discourse will be pronounced by his countryman, Dr. Follen, and the religious services are assigned to my friend Dr. Tuckerman, in whom Dr. Spurzheim took great pleasure.

"Unfortunately, I saw little of your friend. On his arrival, I was at my country residence, where I became seriously sick. On my return to this city, four weeks ago, I had an interview with him as soon as I was strong enough to see him, and before I was able to repeat it he was too sick to visit me. The good man was taken away in the midst of his hopes. His success among us had led him to look on this country as the finest field for his labors, and he thought of devoting several years to the diffusion of his doctrines in the New World. When I speak of his success, I do not mean that he made many converts, but he found in many a disposition to inquire candidly into his system, whilst very many professed to receive important aid and instruction from his analysis and views of human nature. Our consolation under his loss is, that the world is not the only state for benevolent exertion. Your friend."

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* To William Rathbone, Esq.

" *Boston*, January 7, 1834. —— has passed through the school of suffering, and his piety manifests itself in nothing more than in his entire submission to the will of God. He has helped you and your husband, I trust, to look up to that Infinite Being as your Father, and as the Father of your dear children. Yes, they were, and, still more, *are*, his children. Your love to them, deep, intense, as it was, he inspired. It came to you from the Fountain of all love, and it is but a faint image of the unbounded parental goodness with which he regarded and still regards your children. How much stronger must his interest in them be than yours! Can the creature's love approach the Creator's, — the stream equal the inexhaustible source? He gave these children to you, in kindness both to you and them, and in the same kindness he has taken them away. They were born into this world to accomplish a great purpose, the unfolding of an immortal nature; they are born into another to accomplish it more fully. They have not lived in vain, though their lives were so short, nor is the care you have spent on them lost. The faculties which you helped to open endure, and will endure for ever, and you must be grateful for having commenced a glorious work which is to go on for ever. They are safe in the arms of a better Parent. Leave them there, with holy trust.

" Let it be your care to carry on in yourself the work which is now advancing in them. They are making progress; so must you. This is the true way to unite yourself to them. Their best powers and affections are expanding, as you believe, under the care of God. Let yours expand too, for you are the object of the same care. You are to join them again, not by an ineffectual sorrow, but by a sorrow which shall soften and refine the heart, and which shall seek consolation in greater faithfulness to God and your fellow-creatures. I would that I could comfort you, my dear ——; but I should rejoice still more, could I aid you in making affliction the instrument of a new virtue, of a firmer faith in Christ, of a deeper sympathy with your fellow-creatures, of a more efficient benevolence, and of a more confiding love of God. I pray God that you and your husband may derive precious fruits from suffering, — that you may enter with a holier resolution on the warfare against all evil in your hearts and lives, — that you may glow with the love of a higher, purer virtue. Our deepest misery is in ourselves, in our unfaithfulness to the inward monitor and to our Divine Teacher; and affliction is meant to reprove and purify. Let it do its work, and it will bind us to the departed more closely than when they lived."

"*Boston*, February 6, 1834. I trust that your Continental tour is to do you much and permanent good. The sad tidings you have had once and again from home must have made you yearn for domestic intercourse and consolation; but I hope they have not taken away your sensibility to the beautiful in nature and art. I have never found affliction to cut me off from communion with nature, from the spirit of love and beauty in God's works; and there is a seriousness in the great works of art which gives them a rank among the earliest outward resources under suffering. You must, from a sense of duty, open your mind to all the influences which will aid body and mind. You went abroad to fit you to do more good on your return. Do keep this end religiously in sight. See all that you can see; enjoy all that you can enjoy; and come home to us braced for your great work."

"*Newport*, June 15, 1834. I write you from the Island. A few warm days in Boston made me feel that I should be better here. The heat of other places withers me. Here it is blended with something reviving. I am alone. Some seasons of entire seclusion I think do us good, and though I do not seek them, I welcome them, when they come, as aids to Christian virtue.

"Solitude here naturally brings to my mind the changes I have passed through since I grew up on this island. Yesterday I went into town to see ——, and *change* seemed written on all I saw. The old mansion where we used to meet my mother Gibbs's smile and kindness in our childhood, and which the family parted with last year, was so transformed, that I could hardly believe it was the same house. I talked with —— about grandfather and mother. What lessons of frailty, separation, and death! These thoughts, however, produce in my mind no lasting depression. I feel that it is only the outward, the material, which is transitory, and that nothing good, lovely, pure, which I delighted in, has perished.

"I am struck, amidst these changes, with the continuance of the order and beauty of the natural world, and see in this a manifestation of the immutableness of God, and a pledge of the duration of that principle which is nobler than nature, the human soul. The island is now to me what it was half a century ago, only more beautiful. Years have only strengthened my enjoyment of the universe, and of this dear spot in the boundless creation; and this enjoyment is to me one sign that I was made to be an everlasting inhabitant of the universe. Such proofs of immortality are faint, indeed, in comparison with the flood of light shed on this great truth by Jesus Christ. Still, I delight to meet traces of it everywhere, to see it written on nature, and revealed in all the higher principles of the soul. This thought of an endless being, of ever enlarging knowledge and love, of never ceasing approach to God, of continually extending connections with his works and with the good and excellent, — how should it inspire and exalt us! I wish I could fix it more deeply and habitually in my mind. It does not interfere with our most common occupations and pleasures; for, to a reflecting mind, our whole being — including the past, present, and future — has a unity and most intimate dependence; and every right use of our powers, no matter how or where, is carrying us forward to our perfection.

"It is Sunday, a day which always favors such thoughts; but in the country, where it produces more than the usual stillness of rural life, and in my loneliness, you will not wonder that my mind rises to the pure, peaceful mansions which were brought near this day by the resurrection of Christ. There, I trust, dear L——, we shall meet, and be joined to the good who have gone before us."

"*July*, 1836.* This is not one of the thoughtful, reflecting stages of society. Present impulses, overwhelming excitements, hurry the people on. This country is to run its race for the present, without being checked or swayed by opinion. Individuals, however, there are open to truth, and in the long run truth is never lost. May you be one of her chosen oracles!

"You say my letters have not pained you by praise. To me it requires more courage to praise than to reprove. The meanness of flattery is so great, that I am anxious to avoid not only the thing itself, but its appearance. A letter of compliment, which I feel to be due, is to me the most difficult composition. I often err in this respect. I know from my own experience that there are those who need the encouragement of praise. There are more than is thought, who feel the burden of human imperfection too sorely, who receive strength from approbation. I shrink from saying to these even all that I think. Happy they, who, from just confidence in right action, and from the habit of carrying out their convictions, need little foreign support!

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* To Miss Harriet Martineau.

"And now, my friend, must I say farewell? Am I to see and hear you no more? This I will not believe. If the steam navigation shall be established across the Atlantic, I may one day see England, and I shall delight to renew our intercourse. If not, we shall be joined, I hope, in spirit, joined in devotion to the same great cause of humanity, joined in sympathy with our race, joined in the uncompromising association of the great truths by which men are to be made free and regenerated, now and for ever.

"May the best of Heaven's blessings descend on you! May your aspirations after truth and goodness never cease to be more and more fulfilled! It will rejoice me to learn that your visit among us has increased your resources for wise and lofty action on other minds.

"When you can write to me from a prompting of your own spirit, do write. I shall be happy to learn that I have not faded from your memory and heart.

"Once more, my dear friend, farewell. May prosperous winds carry you to your loved home!

"Your sincere friend."

"*July* 29, 1836.* My dear friend,—I thought I had spoken my last word to you on this side the Atlantic; but I have this moment received your letter, and must write a line of acknowledgment. I thank you for this expression of your heart. Without the least tendency to distrust, without the least dejection at the idea of neglect, with entire gratitude for my lot, I still feel that I have not the power which so many others have of awakening love, except in a very narrow circle. I knew that I enjoyed your esteem, but I expected to fade with my native land, not from your thoughts, but from your heart. Your letter satisfies me that I shall have one more *friend* in England. . . . . . I shall not feel far from you; for what a nearness is there in the consciousness of working in the same spirit! and then how near is our common home! Deep as my feeling of imperfection is, I do hope to meet the good in our Father's house. In this hope let us work with him and for him, and for his children, for the poor and miserable, for the outwardly enslaved, and them that wear heavier chains within. If it should ever seem to me that I can aid you in your work, be assured I will write. Farewell."

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* To Miss Harriet Martineau.

"*January* 23, 1837. We know how deeply you and yours are wounded by your late bereavement. The lovely boy was a centre to all your hearts, binding you all more closely together. Could affection have been a shield, he would still be with you. But he needed no shield. A greater love than yours watched over him, and has taken him away. Why he was taken in the dawn of his being, we cannot tell. The secrets of that world into which he has entered can alone explain it. Our world does not seem to have been intended for the education of all. To many it is only a birthplace. They are born to be translated, to receive their education elsewhere. Can we not trust our loving Father to choose the place where his children shall be trained? Is it not enough to know that they are in his hands? What! shall we with our faint love distrust Him who has inspired us with all the affection which we bear our children, and whose goodness is shadowed forth dimly by the strongest human love?

"We sometimes speak as if the child, dying so early, had accomplished no purpose; but we err. The child does much. How much has this little boy done for you all! How much warmth he has shed through your hearts! How many holy feelings he has awakened! How much happiness he has given! What a lovely image he has left behind him! And what a new bond has he formed between you and the future world! Is all this nothing? Have we not cause to thank God for every pure being he has revealed and endeared to us? Let us weep for the departed, but let not the sense of loss make us forget how much has been given, and what a precious hope is left. So unwise and unthankful a grief would show that we needed it. If we have not faith enough to strengthen and comfort us under the loss of a friend, then it is time that the friend was taken. We have not learned wisdom from the gift. We need another school, that of its loss.

"Give my love to ——. They must feel that this affliction has not come without its purpose. Death is a solemn teacher; but who of us can dispense with its lessons? What other teacher can so disenchant the world, so expand our views, give such convictions of immortality, so spiritualize our minds, so prostrate us with a sense of dependence and unworthiness before God? Such an event is an era in the history of parents, and it has often stamped a new character on the whole following life. I wish them every consolation, and, still more, I hope that they may find a blessed, sanctifying influence in affliction."

"*Boston*, February 27, 1837. My dear Sir, — I have this moment heard of the death of my dear, very dear friend, your daughter, and I cannot forbear writing to you immediately, to express my sympathy with you on this sad occasion, and my hope that you will be sustained under this severe trial. When I look back to the life and character of this dear friend, I see one of the loveliest exemplifications of the spirit of Christianity which it has been my happiness to meet. She was in the habit of opening her mind to me with great freedom, and I valued highly the privilege of access to a spirit so pure, so gentle, so overflowing with love, so strict in its demands on itself, so generous and indulgent to others. After her free communications, I felt how far she had outstripped me in the Christian faith. Her piety was singularly filial, though her delicate, sensitive nature was often pained by the consciousness of unworthiness. Her sympathy with Christian goodness and holiness, wherever manifested, was such as I have seldom witnessed. She truly loved Christ in all who bore his image. I can speak of her as I can of few others, for she spoke to me almost with the confidence of a child. I think of her now as a blessed saint; and were the heavens opened to me, and were I to see her among the just made perfect, I could hardly have a stronger confidence in her happiness than I have.

"My dear Sir, you must labor to penetrate beyond the outward appearances and circumstances of death to her spirit. That was a region of light. How she loved you I well know. Her expressions of filial love were touching. To have had such a daughter is a blessing for which there cannot be too fervent gratitude. Will you express to your afflicted daughters my sincere sympathy.

"I remain, respectfully, your friend."

"*May* 17, 1837.* I am not only cheered, but edified, by the sight of one so advanced in years, and so burdened with physical infirmity, yet enjoying so fully the powers and the pleasures of the intellect, so strong in faith, so calm, and bearing such practical testimony to the power of religion.

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* To Noah Worcester, D. D.

It is my earnest desire that a life so happy and useful in its decline may be continued.

"With great respect, your friend."

"*Newport*, *R. I.*, May 23, 1837. I can comprehend the greatness of your affliction. I had not, indeed, much intercourse with ——; but it was not necessary to see her often to know and love her. The simplicity, sweetness, delicacy, and purity of her spirit shone out in her countenance too brightly to be overlooked, even by a stranger. I remember when I was in ——, three or four years ago, I rode with —— to visit her at her residence. It was after her husband's failure, and to this misfortune had been added the sickness of her family, — I think intermittent fever, taken in an unhealthy spot, to which they had retreated after his losses. Here was an accumulation of calamity, and her frame bore the mark of exhausting labor. But a more lovely manifestation of a resigned spirit I never witnessed. The tear trembled in her eye, as she told me of their trials; but a sweet smile said, in the most unequivocal language, — 'His will be done!' I had that morning visited some choice paintings brought by a very opulent friend from Europe, which had given me much pleasure; but on returning to the carriage after my interview with your sister, I said, — 'I have seen and admired a great deal of beauty this morning, but in all those works of genius I have seen nothing so beautiful as the friend we have just left.' That expression of ——'s countenance remains with me, and it cheers and consoles me at this moment. There was something heavenly in that spirit, and that cannot die. . . . . .

"When such friends are taken, we must mourn, and mourn deeply; we owe tears and lamentations to so much goodness, but we must be grateful, too, — grateful that such friends have been given us, that they have loved us, that they have been spared so long, that they have left such sweet images and impressions on our minds, and that we can look upon them, not as lost, but gone before. What blessings friends are, or may be to us, when taken away! Their ministry of love does not cease. God designs through their removal to spiritualize our conceptions of human life and human nature, to extend our views of our being, to open to us the greatness of our destination, to connect us by new ties with futurity, to give us, as it were, a new revelation of immortality. He is the same wise and merciful Father in giving and in taking away friends. He does not take every thing. He leaves himself. He leaves to us our own spiritual being, that infinitely precious gift. He leaves us power to improve under suffering. He leaves us the dear remembrance of the good who have been separated from us. Though dead, they speak. They invite, they summon us to mansions of peace.

"I trust, my dear friend, that you can look to God as your Father; humbly, submissively and gratefully, peacefully, in hope and love. All friends are his gifts, and, with all their beauty and loveliness, are as nothing before his perfection. He is near you. The ties which bind you to him are the nearest, tenderest, of all your ties. Confide in him, and seek strength to confide. One design of suffering is to carry your soul to him with profounder trust."

"*May* 24, 1837.* This event may be used by us to confirm us in that spirit of self-sacrifice of which we have so often spoken. When we see what a vapor life is, how suddenly dissolved, we should dismiss our anxiety about prolonging it, and count that man the most privileged, who, instead of wasting it in efforts to escape its end, offers it up freely in the cause of God and man, of freedom and religion."

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* To Dr. Charles Follen.

"*September* 13, 1837.* What a new thing human life has become under Christianity! And at what age are its influences more kindly than at yours? After seventy, this world's bribes and golden prospects cannot delude us. We feel that it has given us its best, — that is, if we cannot look beyond it. But let the light of Christianity break in upon us, and even this world is irradiated by it to the last. I am a good deal younger than you are; yet I have reached the period when it is thought that life loses, in a measure, its freshness, interest, and charm. But I feel it due to our merciful Father to say, that I find life an increasing good, nature more beautiful and glorious, and the human race more and more interesting; and all this I owe to the moral and religious truths which have been sealed to us by Christ. To you, I am sure, life is still full of interest. The sacrifices you have made to your principles, however painful at the moment, are bringing their reward now. You see, indeed, 'the religious as well as the political world in a state of effervescence.' But are there not good and great principles fermenting? Have we no signs of the time when the many will not be made passive, base instruments to the few, — when they will not be driven in herds to the field of battle, only to give power and fame to some mighty slaughterer, — when they will cease to be the prey and supports of despotism in church and state? I pray God that you may see such an impulse given to the good cause of truth, righteousness, and peace, that you may be able to say, with the rapture of the aged Simeon, — 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.'

"Very respectfully, your friend."

"*Newport*, November 2, 1837. If you are right in your opinions of the individual of whom you wrote, one thing is plain, — that neither you nor I can do him any good. He must be left to that Power which can send pain, affliction, and humiliation, and bring low the proudest heart. I do hope that he will use his admirable talents for better purposes than you suppose; but we have little or no intercourse, seldom or never write, do not for years see one another, and I can judge very little of his present course. I rank him among the most distinguished men of the country, and am inclined to allow him a good deal of latitude in judging of the modes of usefulness. I follow my own sense of right in selecting my objects, and feel that no other can judge of the work given me to do; and I shrink from choosing paths for others.

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* To Captain Thomas Thrush, formerly of the British Navy.

"I have been so often disappointed in friends and public men, that, whilst I place unshaken reliance on the grand results of Providence, I am not sanguine as to the success of this or that individual or institution. I am not disheartened when one fails, or elated when another prospers. I do not judge of the future from my narrow sphere or narrow life. Amidst human inconstancy and guilt, I know that God has still devoted servants on earth, — that truth, piety, and goodness are immortal, and will prevail, — and that even my poor labors (no man can feel their poverty as I do) will, if springing from a pure purpose, obtain a blessing."

"*Boston*, November 9, 1837.* Age, retaining the freshness of youth, is one of the most interesting spectacles on earth. Within a few days I have lost a much revered friend, seventy-eight years old, who, after his seventieth year, wrote two valuable books on theology, and who, to the last, delighted in the study of nature, and entered into all the great movements of the age with an earnestness distinguished from the fervor of youth only by greater calmness and a firmer trust. I never saw him without feeling that I had gained a wisdom which books could not teach. May you, my dear madam, continue to strengthen our hope of immortality by showing us how the spirit can retain its beauty and life, even to the moment when it is withdrawn from human intercourse.

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* To Mrs. Joanna Baillie.

"With great respect and sincere affection."

"*November*, 1837. My dear Miss Worcester, — I ask your acceptance of a discourse pronounced on occasion of your father's death. I trust it will be acceptable, as an expression of my veneration for his character, and of the affection with which I shall always remember him. My veneration for him, great before, has been increased; and now that he is gone, I reproach myself for not having availed myself more of the opportunity of communion with so wise and heavenly a spirit.

"I have taken the liberty, which I hope you will excuse, of inserting a few extracts from your letter. They gave me so much pleasure, and were so just to your father, that I felt as if I ought to communicate them to his friends; and, as I did not name you, I thought your delicacy would not be wounded. I was so conscious of the defects of the discourse, that I was the more disposed to increase the interest of the publication by contributions from others.

"You have great reason for gratitude, that you had such a father, and that he was so long spared to you. His memory is a treasure which no outward changes can take from you, and his death, like his life, will guide you to the world where, we trust, he is at rest. Your sincere friend."

"*Newport*, July 1, 1838.* You are tried in the form most trying to a man of your temper. You are obliged, as you say, to do nothing, — the most laborious kind of doing which could be laid on you. Yet sometimes most is done in these passive states. The sacrifice of the will to the Divine will is most complete. The cross, borne with the spirit of Christ, is the brightest crown. You have shown forth the power of religion in action. Do it now in cheerful endurance. Men will not look on, as when you were doing some great thing; but so much the better. The old notion of an 'evil eye' has gone by; but truly men do cast on us an evil eye, when, by looking on us, they tempt us to act for observation and corrupt the simplicity of our virtue."

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* To Joseph Tuckerman, D. D.

"*Boston*, July 11, 1838.* My dear Sir, — In a letter from Miss Dix, I have just received very unfavorable accounts of your health; more so than you have yourself given. I cannot but hope that you will be strengthened again, for I feel that you must have much to say which you have not yet communicated to the world, and in usefulness you would find much to enjoy. But a higher will disposes of us. In this we will rejoice. Were this world our only sphere of action, we might be depressed at the thought of our unfinished plans, and of going before half of our work was done. But the very power which grasps at so much more than we can accomplish is prophetic of a higher life. You and I have been conscious of a spiritual activity which physical debility has prevented our bringing out. Is this to perish? Is the thirst for higher truth and holiness an illusion? The Fountain from which our spiritual life has flowed is inexhaustible. Will our aspirations after larger communications fail?

"I have been a little troubled on account of a letter I sent you, after reading yours to Mr. Ripley. I had scarcely sent it when I felt that it was very crude, and I could not but fear that you might set down the free suggestions of a letter as deliberate conclusions. I now regret sending it, — from the apprehension that it may have stirred you up to efforts of thought injurious in your debilitated state. I beg you not to think of answering it, — nor to think of it further.

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* To J. Blanco White.

"I have been taken almost wholly from labor for four months, but am slowly rising. Sometimes I dream of a visit to England, and the thought of seeing you comes to me among the chief pleasures I should meet abroad ; but I shall probably prove a dreamer.

"I do not mean to trouble you with a long letter. I write to express my sympathy, and to assure you of the sincere respect with which I remain, Your friend."

"*August* 24, 1838.* My dear Sir, — I received, a few days ago, your last letter, written with a trembling hand; and whilst I was touched and gratified by this proof of your regard, I could not but regret that I had subjected you to so exhausting a labor. You must console yourself by thinking that you did good. I trust I shall be the better for this testimony to your principles, this breathing of your spirit, this expression of calm reliance on God's perpetual inspiration and fatherly love. I hope it is not to be the last testimony. Should Providence renew in any measure your strength, you must give me a few lines, for you have not many friends more interested in you than myself. The conflicts of a mind, seeking, struggling for truth amidst peculiar obstructions, and sacrificing to it, not merely outward good, but friendship, confidence, love, are to me more affecting than all outward warfare. I trust you have received my late letter, written on hearing of your great debility, in which I begged you to forget, or not to think of answering, the preceding one. That will show you how little importance I attached to my criticisms on your communication to Mr. Ripley. I sometimes think of visiting England, and one of the great pleasures I have promised myself has been that of seeing you; but a higher will disposes of us, and who would reverse it? I thank God that he continues to you, amidst your trials, the strength of your faculties. So long as we can think clearly, we can carry on the great work of life, we can turn suffering to a glorious account, we can gather from triumphs over the body a new consciousness of the divinity of the spirit. I have sometimes thought that my gratitude to God was never more lively than in illness; and how many under this trial have had a new revelation of his presence! May he grant you these consolations! You feel, undoubtedly, as we all do on approaching our end here, as if you might have done more for the great cause to which your life had been devoted. To a friend of his race, who looks round on the amount of guilt and error in the world, how little he seems to have achieved! But let us thank God, if in any thing we have served our brethren; and may we not say, in the disproportion of our desires to our doings, that we are destined to a higher efficiency, — to a world where our powers, now so imprisoned, will expand freely and joyfully? But I will not weary with reflections with which you are so familiar. I commend you affectionately to God, the never-failing Fountain of light, truth, peace, love, and blessedness.

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* To J. Blanco White.

"Very truly and respectfully, your friend."

" *September* 5, 1838. Your generous aspirations encourage me to hope that you are to live for good ends, — that your life is not to be a tame, mechanical repetition of the low maxims and pursuits prevailing around you. At the same time, I see tendencies to be guarded against. It is bad to conform to society passively and unthinkingly; but it is bad, too, to quarrel with it without reason. Eccentricity, especially when intentional, an affectation of independence in indifferent matters, or refusing to comply with innocent usages, is foolish, a waste of force which should be kept for important matters, a proof of self-will or self-conceit. In very many things, society is wiser than the individual. The spirit of humanity is a complying one in trifles and in matters of expediency. A man who respects established usages, as far as he may innocently, is more felt when he takes the ground of principle in opposition to the world. I want, above all things, to see you a man of stern principle, of universal justice and charity, and in this character you must often stand apart from the multitude of men; but I do not want to see you carping at what is indifferent, or drawing attention by needless deviations from the common path. It is not wise to make a path of our own, when there is a smooth, beaten road to which no objection can be made.

"In regard to dress, I want you to avoid singularity. Vanity is the thing to be guarded against; and this may be manifested in neglect of established usages, as well as in worship of fashion. Never dress to be distinguished. At the same time it is right to observe the graceful in attire, as we do in manners, in arrangement of our houses, books, &c. The true dress is that which is an expression of inward beauty and dignity; but another age is to discover this. I am ready to smile at my letter. That *I* should become a teacher of the graces seems a little out of place. Some would say, — 'Physician, heal thyself.'"

"*Newport*, October 3, 1838.* Our departed friend seemed to me a model of the domestic virtues. With no display, with singular quiet, her affections were always alive among you, her sympathies and cares never exhausted. Her character interested me by its contrast with the spirit of the age, an age of publicity and pretension. I do not know that I could have named a more striking example of singleness of spirit, — simplicity of purpose. How much good has she done you all! What a blessing was she in that sphere through which she moved so tranquilly! I confess, my knowledge of good wives and mothers — I have known many — has done as much as any thing to raise my ideas and hopes of human nature. She has left you blessings in your children, and these, I trust, will give you what we so much need as we advance in life, a home of love."

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* To Joseph Tuckerman, D. D.

"*Boston*, January 20, 1839. I reproach myself for not having written. It is not that you have been absent from my thoughts. The distance of my friends endears them to me. When they are gone, I reproach myself for not having been more to them when they were near. Solemn and tender thoughts come over me. The final separation is brought home to me. Still, I do not write, for I have little to say. The time is gone by for writing such letters as I could once have sent. I cannot preach in letters, as once. I must have something to say of the near and the real; and I feel that all this you get from others, who can report it far better than myself.

"The true correspondence — that which should give the inward life, the secret struggles and joys of the spirit — is what I am not wholly unfit for. But who of us trust in one another enough for such communications? Is it not true, that the best as well as the worst of every human spirit lies within itself, perhaps unsuspected by nearest friends? The day of revelation is to come. Perhaps this long apology will be to you something of a revelation."

"*Boston*, August 26, 1839. What a mystery this diffidence is! We shrink before people whom we cannot respect, perhaps whom we despise. It is no sign of coward ice, for very brave men discover it. It is no sign of humility, for I think I have seen it in the proud and aspiring. One would say, at first sight, that it is an indication of selfishness, a proof that a man is busy always with himself, anxious how he shall be viewed; and yet is it not to be seen sometimes in the disinterested? It is a great mystery. Do study it. I believe this is a way of getting the better of it. We say, in common speech, that a man masters a subject which he comprehends, and real knowledge has a great deal of power in it. Is diffidence a primitive feeling, or does it grow out of others? Its commonness in childhood seems to indicate that it is primitive. If so, what are its uses? or what is its connection with our whole nature? You see I would set you to thinking about this tyrant within you. I confess I do not understand it, though it has palsied and unmanned me often enough to make itself known.

"There are two great means of overcoming it. The first is, mixing freely with society, fighting with it on its own ground, hardening ourselves by facing those whom we fear, the process which makes veterans out of raw recruits. The second method of conquering this invisible foe is far nobler. It is the rational and moral one. It consists in self-culture and self-respect; in resolving to be, not to seem, worthy of regard; in estimating ourselves wisely, and feeling that others' judgments make us neither better nor worse; in comprehending how little others think of us, and how little they are capable of knowing us; in becoming self-forgetful, by taking a generous interest in others; in adopting noble, immutable principles of action, and adhering to them through good report and evil report; in learning the weaknesses and follies of those whom we dread, whilst at the same time we are just to their good qualities; in putting down the passion for distinction, and in rising to a sense of

God's presence with us. I am sure that these rational means are of great efficacy. Unhappily, diffidence is apt to produce a despair of our power to conquer it; but whilst a strong natural diffidence is never wholly subdued, I know that its blighting, palsying influence over us may be wholly neutralized."

"*September* 18, 1839.* My dear Sir, — It was a great pleasure to me to hear from you again, — to see your handwriting once more. Perhaps it may hardly seem a kindness to wish you to continue longer on earth, suffering as much as you do; but as long as the powers are spared, the great end of life may be answered, and much good done. I sometimes think of visiting England, now that steam has done so much towards placing the continents side by side; and in that case, how great should I feel my loss, were your voice of welcome to be wanting! . . . . .

"I thank you for the kind things you have said of my Letter on Slavery. I wish you sympathized with me more on the subject of war. I have no faith in the virtues which grow out of war. The courage of soldiers ranks little higher than brute force. It abounds among the lowest and most profligate men; and the sense of honor is almost synonymous with the want of moral independence. When I think of the spirit of duelling and war in the Christian world, and then of the superiority to the world and the unbounded love and forbearance which characterize our religion, I am struck with the little progress which Christianity has as yet made. Has not Mahometanism acted more powerfully on the Mahometan mind? This slow progress of Christianity is to be explained by its uncompromising hostility to all the selfish and sensual principles, and by the grandeur of its moral purpose, and thus attests its divine origin.

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* To J. Blanco White.

I am sorry not to have written a more entertaining letter to an invalid; but all my associations with you lead me to grave subjects. Do not hold yourself bound to answer, or even to think of, my remarks, if any thing more interesting offers itself. When you can write, your letters will be acceptable to none more than me.

"With sincere sympathy and respect, yours."

"*November*, 1839. You are wrong in thinking of peace as something which is to come only in the future life. There is no reason for expecting it hereafter but its having begun now. Every true surrender of selfish principles to God and the inward monitor is the beginning of heaven and heaven's peace. The best proof of a heaven to come is its dawning within us now. We are blinded by common errors to the degree of celestial good which is to be found on earth. I do not tell you to labor for it; for a selfish impatience may remove it from us. I would say, accept your inward and outward trials as appointed by the friend of your soul for its progress and perfection, and use them for this end, not doubtingly or impetuously, but confidingly; and just as fast as the power of Christian virtue grows within you, peace and heaven will come, unless, for some greater good, present happiness be obstructed by physical causes. Be of good cheer. Be not wilful in well doing. Be not anxious."

"*Boston*, January 21, 1840. Your faith has met unusual trials, and has not failed. I know few things which so darken our views of the moral government of God as the experience of baseness and treachery in people who have won our confidence. We are tempted to question the reality of human virtue, to suspect the hollowness of all appearances of truth and piety, and it is but a step to call in question the moral purpose for which we are placed on earth. But you have been saved from this rock; and in proportion as man has failed you, you have clung more earnestly to God. I have felt the power of this temptation. When I see how many of my race are debased, false, earthly, living without God, the question comes to me, — 'Is God indeed the friend and lover of all human souls, and is he working for their salvation?' But I trust. One of the most blessed influences of Christianity is, that it assures us of the Divine grace towards the most fallen; and just as far as we can realize this, our love flows out towards the most guilty.

"You ask me for thoughts which may strengthen you. Your experience of life and of God's goodness is a far better teacher than any suggestions of a fellow-being. The thought on which I delight to dwell, as I advance in life, is, that God is within me, — always present to my soul, to teach, to rebuke, to aid, to bless, — that he truly desires my salvation from all inward evils, that he is ever ready to give his spirit, that there is no part of my lot which may not carry me forward to perfection, and that outward things are of little or no moment, provided this great work of God goes on within. The body and the world vanish more and more, and the soul, the immortal principle, made to bear God's image, to partake of his truth, goodness, purity, and happiness, comes out to my consciousness more and more distinctly; and in feeling God's intimate presence with this, to enlighten, quicken, and save, I find strength, and hope, and peace. That Christians aim at too little, and hope too little from God and from their own souls, I feel more and more. Another reformation, I believe, is to come, though you and I may not live to see it."

"*February* 12, 1840. I wish you would define your objects, and inquire into the true means of accomplishing them. Vague notions, amidst their other evils, impair our energy. I find I am strong in proportion as I get clear perceptions. . . . . . As to effects, they are not in our power, or only to a limited degree. With physical agents we can work confidently; but when we come to act on our fellow-creatures, on free beings, we meet a power not to be measured or controlled. We know in general that there is an energy in truth and justice, and that he who manifests them calmly, brightly, will not live in vain; but having done the duty of a man, we must leave events to a higher power. . . . . .

"It is not one effort which does much, but a consistent, persevering testimony to high principles. We are to cast our seed on the waters, and do our best in faith. It is not the will of Providence that we should produce great visible good, in the immature state of our characters. Our virtue would sink under such a trial. Our ambition has too much to do with our projects of usefulness, and the success we desire would inflame it to madness. . . . . . I have little faith in effects which are not founded in truth. A false theology may produce infinite excitement, but the force is soon spent. Light, light is the great power. It is easy to declaim against evils, but to see the true good and make it visible to others, this is a higher, harder work."

"*Boston*, April 13, 1840.* My dear Sir,—I wrote to you some time ago, and, though I have received no answer, write again, as you have given me reason to think that a letter from a friend is some alleviation of your sufferings. I fear, from your silence, that the relief which had been given you when I last heard from you has been withdrawn. If so, I must believe that the gratitude and trust which it inspired have prepared you to resign it. What a privilege have you enjoyed, amidst your protracted pains, in the power of fixing your mind on the highest objects of thought! In reading Fénelon a day or two ago, I met with the doctrine, that suffering, by being viewed as the will of God, may be *loved* and borne without a desire to remove it. Fénelon was honest, and it would seem from him and other mystics, that the power of the devout mind to transmute pain is very great. I suppose the examples of this power given in the Catholic books of Saints are exaggerations, but must have some ground. I take pleasure in reading their triumphs of mind over body, their manifestations of spiritual energy, though I must confess they are too often deformed by some excess.

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* To J. Blanco White.

"I sent you a discourse, which I hope you received, occasioned by the death of Dr. Follen. He was one of my dearest friends, and I cannot hope to replace him. Perhaps I have never known so true a friend of freedom, of the Right. He took part in the ill-advised revolutionary movements of Germany, — after Napoleon's fall, — occasioned by the refusal of the sovereigns to redeem their pledge of new constitutions to the people who had restored them. Though little more than twenty years old, his disinterestedness, courage, ability, placed him among the principal leaders. He was compelled to take refuge in Switzerland, where he was again and again demanded by the Holy Alliance. He at length found safety here, but not the reward due to his loyalty to freedom. In obedience to his highest convictions of duty, he joined the Antislavery Society, which you know has been persecuted in the Free States, because of the irritation excited by it in the Slave States, and by this act made himself unpopular, and obstructed his success in life. We were not worthy of such a man. He lived, not prosperous, yet greatly blessed in domestic life, and cheered by his own magnanimous spirit, — and died to receive acknowledgments of his worth which should have been granted in life. He suffered for his principles, and yet in his case I can see that virtue was its own great reward.

" I suppose your thoughts turn often on Spain. Is not that country a case of *singular demoralization?* It is a singular fact, that Spain and her American colonies, through their late revolutionary movements, have not produced one great leader, unless Bolivar is an exception. How happens this? In France, England, and America, revolutions have been fruitful of great men. Why not in Spain? Is not the cause to be found in a singular corruption which throws uncertainty over the future? Has not the revolutionary movement in Spain and her colonies been more systematically bloody than elsewhere? Of this I am not sure; but connecting what I have heard on this point with the history of her conquests of South America, I should think Spain more marked by cruelty than other countries; and if so, is not the cause to be found in her bigotry, fierce intolerance, which embodied itself in the Inquisition? . . . . .

" I have written a long letter, not for an answer, but in the hope of administering a moment's pleasure.

" With sincere respect, your friend."

"*July* 4, 1840.* Your father is associated in my mind with the great movements of our times, with the struggles for civil and religious liberty and for a purer Christianity, and with the most important institutions for human improvement. I think of him as full of animation and hope, as alive to whatever touched the interests of his race, and as capable of great exertion. His family must be grateful that he was spared to them so long, and that Providence opened to him spheres of action so congenial with his holiest and best affections. The manner of his death gave, at first, a shock to us all; but may it not be the design of God, in surrounding those who are dear to us with outward painful circumstances, to drive us, as it were, to that which is inward, spiritual, endearing, over which waves and storms and the accidents of time and place have no power?"

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* To Miss Carpenter.

"*July* 21, 1840.* My dear Sir, — I was grateful to you for your letter of May, received a short time since, and yet I could not but regret that you had made a painful effort. I write you, not to lay you under the least obligation to reply, but because you have expressed an interest in my letters. I feel that you have a right to any alleviation of your sufferings I can give. Your experience differs from mine, for I have had little acute pain. I do not know that I ever suggested to you a fancy which has sometimes come into my head. I have thought, that, by analyzing a pain, I have been able to find an element of pleasure in it. I have thought, too, that, by looking a pain fully in the face and comprehending it, I have diminished its intensity. Distinct perception, instead of aggravating, decreases evil. This I have found when reading accounts of terrible accidents which have at first made me shudder. By taking them to pieces, and conceiving each part distinctly, I have been able to think of them calmly, and to feel that I, too, could pass through them. Sympathy increases by the process, but not fear. The sympathy weakens the personal fear; but this is not the whole explanation. The soul, by resisting the first shudder, and by placing itself near the terrible through an act of the will, puts forth energies which reveal it to itself, and make it conscious of something within, mightier than suffering. The power of distinct knowledge in giving courage I have never seen insisted on, and yet it is a part of my experience. The unknown, the vague, the dark, what imagination invests with infinity, — this terrifies; and the remark applies not to physical evils, but to all others.

"You speak in your letter of the relief you have found in music. Have you met with a very curious book, 'The Correspondence of Goethe with a Child'? Her name was Bettina. I fell in with the work on a journey, and ran through it, omitting a good deal. It interested me as a psychologist, for it gives quite a new specimen of mind. A good deal in it relates to music, much of which I could not understand, and much which sounded like extravagance,— but I felt that there was a truth at bottom, and I wanted to understand more. I am no musician, and want a good ear, and yet I am conscious of a power in music which I want words to describe. It touches chords, reaches depths in the soul, which lie beyond all other influences,— extends my consciousness, and has sometimes given me a pleasure which I may have found in nothing else. Nothing in my experience is more mysterious, more inexplicable. An instinct has always led men to transfer it to heaven, and I suspect the Christian under its power has often attained to a singular consciousness of his immortality. Facts of this nature make me feel what an infinite mystery our nature is, and how little our books of science reveal it to us.

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* To J. Blanco White.

"I was gratified in reading in the Christian Teacher an article on the Midsummer Night's Dream from your pen. You there speak of Don Quixote. That work has never produced its full effect on me, on account of my deep interest in the hero, which makes me indignant at the contumelious treatment he receives. I sympathize with and venerate the knight too much to laugh at him, and wish to join him in discomfiting his assailants. Was the author aware of his work at the moment of beginning it? His first delineation of Quixote is that of a madman; you are not at all prepared for his loftiness of mind. Did not Cervantes start with the first conception, and lay out the adventures of his hero in correspondence with it? Did not the nobler conception steal on him afterwards? Whether this suggestion has been made, I do not know; but the parts do not cohere in my mind. I love the Don too much to enjoy his history.

"I still hope to hear that you have found relief. As I have told you, it gives me much pleasure to hear from you; but you must write only when you can find some pleasure in the exercise.

"With respect, your sincere friend."

"*Boston*, June 20, 1841.* My dear Sir, — Your letter of May 24, just received, has given me pain, though it was expected. Your previous letter had prepared me to hear of Mr. White's departure. I ought not to feel pain at an event which has terminated such severe sufferings, and converted his faith into fruition. But we cannot dismiss a friend from our home, much more from the world, without some sadness. I confess I have a feeling of disappointment at this event. I have for years cherished the hope of seeing Mr. White. When I have thought of crossing the ocean, the pleasure of intercourse with him has risen to my mind, among the chief I should find in England. Perhaps there was not a man in your country whom I wanted so much to see. I felt that no mind could open to me so interesting and instructive a history. I know by experience some of the conflicts of spirit through which he passed, and I longed to put a thousand questions to him about the processes through which he arrived at this and another conviction. I venerated the rare heroism with which he sought truth. But he is gone, and I am to know him only in another world. The account you give me of his trust and patience has done me good. I am little moved by passionate piety in death; but how grand is the entire submission of so calm, reflecting a man, in such deep suffering! My own trust seems to have gained strength. I rejoice that he has committed his manuscripts to *you*, for you understand him better than any body. I shall wait impatiently for his autobiography. I besought him again and again to leave some record of his inward history; and I expect from it singular benefits. Not that I shall agree with him in all his speculations: I differed from him a good deal; but I do not know that I ever read any thing from his pen which I did not find instructive. He understood the controversy between Romanism and Protestantism as few do. Very few of us get to the heart of this quarrel. Most Protestants fight Romanism under its own standard.

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* To the Rev. J. H. Thom.

"I have sometimes observed on the beach, which I am in the habit of visiting, a solemn, unceasing undertone, quite distinct from the dashings of the separate, successive waves; and so in certain minds I observe a deep undertone of truth, even when they express particular views which seem to me discordant or false. I had always this feeling about Mr. White. I could not always agree with him, but I felt that he never lost his grasp of the greatest truths.

"I sympathize sincerely with you in your loss. How much have you lost! The daily privilege of communion with a great and good mind is a daily light shed over our path. I know something of your affliction, for in the short space of two years God has taken from me two friends, Dr. Follen and Dr. Tuckerman, who were knit to me in true Christian brotherhood. But we will not say we have lost such friends. They live within us in sweet and tender remembrances. They live around us in the fruits of their holy labors. They live above us, and call us, in the tones of a friendship which Heaven has refined, to strengthen our union with them by sharing their progress in truth and virtue. I shall write a line to Mrs. Rathbone, to whom I feel myself a debtor, for her kindness to our common friend. When you have leisure, I shall be glad to know more particularly what writings Mr. White left.

"Very sincerely, your friend."

"*June* 21, 1841.* You gave me great comfort by your account of Mr. White. Perhaps you hardly knew how dear he was to me. I had never seen him, but the imagination and heart had woven a tie as strong as real intercourse produces. I read many years ago Mr. White's letters on Spain, and when I was told that the inward history of a Catholic priest given in that book had been drawn in part from the author's experience, I felt a strong interest in him, and the sentiment has received strength from his successive writings, from accounts of his friends, and especially from his correspondence. I wished to see him perhaps more than any man in your country. The struggles of his mind for truth, which were continued for so many years, the vast tracts of opinion over which he had passed, and the infinite variety of thought and emotion which his experience must have embraced, made me look on him as a man who had crowded many lives into one, or who had traversed all lands and seas, and been driven by all their storms, who had enjoyed or suffered all climates, and, after his long, perilous voyage, had found a quiet haven. I felt that he could answer questions which no other man could. Then the reports brought me of his sweet, mild spirit, which had withstood a life of controversy, shed over him a peculiar moral beauty. His writings, too, had prepared me to expect a rich, fresh intellect. He always rose to my mind when I thought of a visit to your country, and now he has vanished, and it is well that he has gone.

"I rejoice to think that he found such a shelter in his last hours. All England, I am sure, could not have furnished him a more loving home to live and die in, more faithful friends, more Christian sympathy. *He* was privileged, and so were *you*. To minister to the last sufferings of a good great man, to witness the triumph of faith, patience, love, over the last agonies, to be looked on with affection by the dying whom we revere, to feel that we have formed a close, tender union with an immortal spirit, — these are privileges indeed. Were I authorized, I would thank you, your husband, your children, for your offices of love to our departed friend.

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* To Mrs. William Rathbone.

"The passage which he dictated to you for me showed the vigor and originality of his intellect. I prize it as a testimony of personal regard, as well as for its own sake."

"What strangely various forms love takes! In most people, affection is a chief ground of faith in immortality. The loss of friends carries them into the future world. Love cannot let the departed go. It clings to them in a better world, seizes on every proof of that world, and sighs for reunion. Some of my Jewish friends, of singularly strong affections, speak of their departed as of their living friends, and seem to have no more doubts of their blessedness than of their own existence. But in you affection takes the form of anxiety and fear, just as some tender parents think only of the perils of children who are separated from them. I cannot enter into your state of mind, for my own experience has been wholly different.

"My faith in immortality rests very little on mere affection, but very much on the *fact* of human excellence. The sight of eminent virtue carries me up to heaven at once. Indeed, virtue and heaven are very much one in my sight. It seems to me as natural for virtue to *live*, as for the animal to breathe, and much more. Virtue is the only thing in the universe of the continuance of which I am sure, for it is of the very essence of God. Every thing else may pass away; this cannot."

"*Newport*, June 27, 1841.* There is presumption in attempting to explain particular dispensations of God. He is to be judged by his vast universal laws, not by this or that fact. We sometimes, however, seem to catch glimpses of particular fitness in a trial to the sufferer. . . . . . Perhaps the greatness of mental suffering is of itself proof of its being needed. A nature capable of suffering is capable of proportionate doing, while at the same time this nature may carry within itself obstructions to its high destiny.

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* To Mrs. E. L. Follen.

"I am, however, less and less disposed to undertake the interpretation of particular events. I have been reading Nichol's Architecture of the Heavens, which you named to me, and it has filled me with adoration, humility, and hope. It reveals a stupendousness in God's works, a silent, slow, solemn unfolding of his purposes, before which I bow in a kindred silence. I cease to wonder that six thousand years have not done more for the race, when I see so clearly that a thousand years are but a day to the Eternal. The connections of human life stretch before us, and are lost in the endless ages which are needed to accomplish God's designs. And yet I do not feel myself sinking into insignificance under the weight of these thoughts. I am amazed by the grandeur of the human spirit, which out of a few signs detected by the telescope can construct the universe. My joy and reverence assure me that this universe is my school and everlasting home. . . . . .

"Since I saw you, I have made a long visit to Philadelphia and New York, and I return with an unchilled faith, I trust with a brighter hope. Everywhere there are spirits kindled by great thoughts, by generous sympathies. The mass, indeed, are of the world ; but the good are of a higher order than formerly. This is the grand cheering fact. Tremendous evils are to be contended with ; but there are men and women who can look them in the face and not fear, who have within them a consciousness of something mightier than all the evil. How it refreshes me to meet with a strong, hopeful soul ! . . . . .

"I am glad you are approaching the end of your interesting, holy task. Be not troubled at the thought of the book passing into unworthy hands. Remember the Great Teacher knew that his seed was to be sown on rocks, and among thorns; still he rejoiced to scatter it, for some was to fall on the good and honest heart. Besides, the seed on the rock is not always lost. It finds sometimes a little chasm into which to strike its root. Let us not distrust. Let us not despise even the worldly. They have in them all that we have, sometimes more; and who knows but that your book is to reach the unknown divinity within them?"

"*August* 2, 1841.* In regard to the evils of life, they trouble me less and less. I see pain and death everywhere. All animated nature suffers and dies. Life begins and ends in pain. Then pain has a great work to do. Then there is a vast good before us, to outweigh and annihilate it. Its universality reconciles me to it. I do not ask to be exempted from the common lot. In this, as in all things, I wish to go with my race. I pretend not to explain events, but I do see glorious issues of suffering, and these are enough. Once, had I been called upon to create the earth, I should have done as the many would now, — I should have laid it out in pleasure-grounds, and given man Milton's occupation of tending flowers, &c., &c. But I am now satisfied with this wild earth, its awful mountains and depths, steeps and torrents. I am not sorry to learn that God's end is a virtue far higher than I should have prescribed."

"*Newport*, September 13, 1841. I should have answered your letter sooner; I ought to have expressed my gratitude and sympathy to you immediately, for I am truly grateful.

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* To Mrs. E. L. Follen.

You know not how much good is done me by being assured that I am not laboring in vain, that I am touching some hearts, opening some minds to truth, that God is raising up friends of the injured, friends of humanity, around me.

"You wonder at the insensibility of multitudes to slavery. But is there any mystery in the affair? If we take the teachings and spirit of Jesus into the world, and apply their standard to our fellow-creatures, how painfully are we made to feel that Christianity has hardly begun its redeeming, regenerating work! Even among those who manifest many interesting qualities, and much conscientiousness in certain relations, how often do we miss that universal, impartial love, that deep, wide humanity, which is the very soul of our religion! After all, what an absorbing worldliness, what a timid yielding to popular errors and sins, what want of faith in *perfection* as the end of our being, do we see in what are called the good!

"The subject of slavery has been useful to me, as helping me to understand the true condition of society. But we are not to despair. The longer I live, the more I feel the greatness of the work to be done in the world, and the more I am sure of its accomplishment.

"The presence of great truths and principles to a few minds is to me an earnest of their universal triumph. It is plain that Christians are waking up to discern the real spirit of their religion. Multitudes have light enough to make them uneasy in their present low condition. The old repose of indifference is giving way. Your state of mind represents what is passing in others. The change goes on as fast as can be expected. Habitual moral lethargy on any subject is chronic disease, and mental diseases are not healed by miracle. The insensibility to slavery is but one of many manifestations of the general distrust with which human nature is regarded, of the general contempt for the highest rights and interests of human beings. Here is the deep and almost universal malady. Whatever abates this, whatever stirs up men to look with respect and tenderness on their fellow-creatures, is a step towards the abolition of slavery. Now I do see signs of a right movement in this direction, and this encourages me. Our duty is to avail ourselves of the opportunity which God gives us to communicate just views and a right spirit; nor must we look on this means as trifling; for every victory over the slave-trade and slavery has been gained by the force of opinion. In England, policy and interest opposed change; but the Christian spirit, pervading all denominations, bore down opposition.

"You must not say that in your sphere you can do little or nothing. Be patient, be confiding. You do not choose your sphere. Prepare yourself for greater usefulness by fidelity in the path Providence now marks out for you. Avail yourself of opportunities to bear witness to the truth, as far as these are given. Cultivate in yourself the disinterested, mild, generous, resolute spirit of Jesus Christ. In these ways accumulate moral power, and be assured that openings for its exercise will multiply. Nothing helps us to discover means of doing good, like growing better and stronger. In this confidence be calm. To do good, it is essential to preserve the intellect clear, to unite sound judgment with impulse and sensibility, to see things as they are; and no little watchfulness and self-denial is needed to keep the inward eye in this healthy state. Be grateful that in any way or to any degree you may be God's minister on earth."

"*Newport*, September 25, 1841. His religion has been an infinite good to him, and this is his excuse for being somewhat intolerant. Few good men distinguish the essential from the unessential parts of their faith. They feel that as a whole it has strengthened and served them, and they naturally shrink from an assault on its slightest outworks. I respect this sensitiveness to all innovation, when it springs from no pride of opinion, no insensibility to others' rights, but from a principle of reverence, and a dread of losing that truth which is the life of the soul."

"*Newport*, September 26, 1841. My dear Miss Martineau, — Your last letter gave me great pleasure. My nature is so hopeful, that I have all along felt as if you were to be restored. It is particularly hard for me to associate death with those who are full of inward life, and who have the capacity and will to labor in a good cause."

"*December* 21, 1841.* Few things are so uncertain as the immediate reception of a book. Its merit is no pledge of public favor. Books which amuse, or which pander to the prejudices, passions, party spirit, sectarian spirit, and selfish interests of the day, succeed best. When we publish, we must prepare ourselves for neglect, indifference, and even unkind remark. I am sure there are prepared spirits for your work. I hope not a few, but I expect no sensation from it. You offer to your fellow-beings a portrait of the mind, heart, labors, conflicts, thoughts, aspirations, of a good and great spirit. Leave it to do its work, to act on all souls, and dismiss all anxiety. I hope for the best. I shall not be troubled by whatever may take place."

"*Boston*, December 21, 1841.† I became a subscriber to the Antislavery Standard soon after I learned that it had passed into your hands, and perhaps the occasion will allow me to express the strong interest I take in you and your labors. You have suffered much for a great cause; but you have not suffered without the sympathy, respect, and affection of some, I hope not a few, whose feelings have not been expressed. Among these I may number myself. I now regret, that, when you were so near me, I saw so little of you. I know that you have higher supports and consolations than the sympathy of your fellow-creatures, nor do I offer mine because I attach any great value to it; but it is a relief to my own mind to thank you for what you have done for the oppressed, and to express the pleasure, I hope profit, which I have received from the various efforts of your mind.

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* To Mrs. E. L. Follen.

† To Mrs. L. M. Child.

"I have been delighted to see in your 'Letters' in the Standard such sure marks of a fresh, living, hopeful spirit,—to see that the flow of genial, noble feeling has been in no degree checked by the outward discouragements of life. The world's frowns can do us little harm, if they do not blight our spirits; and we are under obligations to all who teach us, not in words, but in life, that there is an inward power which can withstand all the adverse forces of the world. With the best wishes for your health and success,

"I remain your sincere friend."

"*Boston*, February 21, 1842. Wherever we establish ourselves, we must encounter difficulty and temptation, must lead lives of conflict, must approach good through many obstructions. It seems to me that most human pursuits or modes of subsistence may be followed conscientiously without forfeiting the moderate success which ought to satisfy us. In business we may scrupulously deny ourselves all unfair advantages, and yet live. We may renounce in manner whatever is inconsistent with truth and with our brotherly relation to every human being, and yet find encouragement enough in our calling to support ourselves and our families. Our lives should be a protest against the evil in the world; but much depends on the spirit in which the protest is made. I believe that true love is stern, severe, inflexible, in the sense of withholding all countenance from whatever can injure or degrade any human being. It demands from friend or foe strict adherence to the right and good, and makes no compromise with evil. At the same time, it 'puts off all bitterness, wrath, censoriousness,' and is mild, sweet, affectionate, sympathizing, slow to anger, ready to forgive. There is something genial, warm, hearty in it, even when it condemns, and such a freedom from haughtiness, self-consciousness, self-will, and the spirit of dictation, that it escapes a thousand ills which beset the unfeeling, unthinking reformer.

"What is needed now, I think, is a protest against the wrongful in business and the exclusive and selfish in manners, in the very thick of business, amidst the very throngs of men. He who in the midst of prevarication, self-seeking, concealment, and jealous competition carries on his work honestly, frankly, kindly, is the true reformer."

"*March* 12, 1842.* My dear friend, — You see I reciprocate your 'familiar and affectionate phrase'; and I do it heartily. There are, indeed, few people whom I address in this way, for I fear to use language stronger than my feelings; and I shrink so much from the appearance of flattering words, that I not seldom smother affections which struggle for utterance. But I grow freer as I grow older. Age has no freezing influence, and the inward fountain gushes out more naturally. To *you* I ought to open my heart, after what you have told me of the good which a loving, cheering word does you. I confess I had thought of you as raised more than most of us above the need of sympathy. I had heard so often of your brave endurance of adversity, and was conscious of having suffered so little myself for truth and humanity, that I almost questioned my right to send you encouraging words, and certainly did not expect so affectionate a response. I thank you for your gratitude. It shows me that I can do more than I believed by expressions of esteem and admiration. If I can lift up and strengthen such a spirit, how can I keep silence?"

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* To Mrs. L. M. Child.

"*Lenox*, July 27, 1842. Your doctrine about the necessity of excluding the outward world I question. Entire abstraction from the outward for a time is important; but that the material and spiritual world are at war, I do not believe. God and the greatest truths are manifested in the external universe. The abstraction which you think so important has its limits. We can live in both worlds at once."

"*Lenox*, August 18, 1842. I would not make you 'of the world,' if I could, that you might escape all dissatisfaction with things as they are, and might plunge unrepiningly into the current which is hurrying on the multitude they know not where. Never lose your faith in the high purpose of your being, in man's infinite destiny. But I desire to carry your faith farther. I wish you to confide in the wisdom and goodness of that Providence which has seen fit to connect the spirit with the body, to place the heir of heaven for a time on earth, to subject us to necessities, toils, outward cares, and numberless details, and which has ordained these as a part of the processes by which we may be carried forward and upward. To you the outward world and the inward are in hostility. Believe that they may be made friends. Believe that persevering effort in a vocation, that the exercise of judgment and invention, and the practice of forbearance and kindness, in common affairs, may be so united with the highest speculation, so hallowed by pure aims, that they may bring about a more complete and harmonious development of your nature than what you would call a purely spiritual mode of life. We are to bend circumstances, common relations, to our great end, and it may be done. . . . . . To become interested in men, we must act with them from pure motives, must mix with them, now to coöperate with, now to resist, them. You need not fear. You will find courage and strength, if you will commit yourself to a good course. We should all shrink from our vocation, could we at the beginning foresee the difficulties in our path. But trial brings strength. Unexpected resources spring up by the side of unexpected obstacles."

"*Lenox*, August, 1842.* Our letters have informed us of the removal of your venerated mother. We feel that the change was a blessing; that it was time for the weary traveller to rest, — for the discipline of life, so unusually protracted, to end, — for the spirit to leave the body which had so long hung on it as a weight. What a change is death to one who has approached it through extreme old age! How hard it is to conceive of a friend, on whom the furrows have been deepening and the head whitening for so many years, laying aside all debility, all the infirmities of age, and entering a new existence of perpetual health, freshness, and, may we not say, youth! I remember, when my grandfather died, at about ninety-four years old, the thought darted through my mind, 'How shall I know him without that gray head, those deep lines of time on his countenance?' These seemed to enter almost into his identity. Yet our new senses will recognize our old friends with a quickness little comprehended now. To you this event, so much to be desired, is an affliction, a bereavement. How peculiar the relation of a mother! She was our first friend, and from the hour of our birth, amidst all life's changes, and the inconstancy of other loves, that faithful, tender heart never forsook us, to its last throb. A parent's love is the best type of the immutableness of the Divine."

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* To Mrs. George Lee.

"*Lenox*, August, 1842. I am as well as usual, and enjoy what I call health, the more for its interruption. You speak of yourself as an 'automaton.' It is thus that the heart rests after painful excitement and deep sorrow. It is well for us that none of our emotions can retain uninterrupted vividness, and, especially, that the more vehement exhaust themselves. By this kind provision we are saved from being absorbed in a particular feeling, from shutting up the soul in a particular event. Our whole nature is brought into action. A false, sad notion has injured many, that we owe it to departed friends to die to those who remain, to die to our race, to feed on dark pictures of life, to reject the blessings which our kind Father has strewed in our path, because some have been taken from us. It ought to be the influence of bereavement, of the vanishing of loved ones from our sight, to give us more reverent and quickening conceptions of the spiritual nature of the undying soul, of that vast futurity through which our faculties and affections are to expand into a divine life and felicity; and under this hope, we should desire to enter on a nobler field of action now. The departed have gone to see, to love, and serve the Infinite Father with a new fervor and elevation of spirit, and we should strive to sympathize with them, to be joined with them by participation of their progress. We are apt to feel as if nothing we could do on earth bears a relation to what the good are doing in a higher world; but it is not so. Heaven and earth are not so far apart. Every disinterested act, every sacrifice to duty, every exertion for the good of 'one of the least of Christ's brethren,' every new insight into God's works, every new impulse given to the love of truth and goodness, associates us with the departed, brings us nearer to them, and is as truly heavenly as if we were acting, not on earth, but in heaven. These are common truths, but we do not feel them. The spiritual tie between us and the departed is not felt as it should be. Our union with them daily grows stronger, if we daily make progress in what they are growing in."

"I am never surprised to hear of misgivings, doubts, or self-distrust, the great trial of life to many; and at the same time, one of the grand signs of our destiny is, that our conception of virtue, holiness, outstrips our powers of immediate attainment. The very improvement of our moral sense becomes a source of fear; our very progress in goodness, by opening new spheres of duty, may sometimes discourage us. Humility always grows with virtue, with increasing knowledge of God. I have but one great trial of life, and that is, the disproportion between my idea of duty and my practice. Our fear from this source is in part unreasonable. Our idea of the perfect, the holy, is not to be our standard of self-judgment any farther than we have power to realize it. Perfection is revealed to us, not to torture us from our falling short of it, but to be a kindling, imposing object, to be seized by faith as our certain destiny, if we are faithful to the light and strength now given.

"We are not to repine or fear, because in our childhood we want maturity of wisdom or strength, — but we are to be animated by the thought of what we may become. Still, after making all allowances, we must suffer from self-rebuke. Our own hearts often condemn us. Our pure, spiritual resolves, how often they fail us! But we must never despair. The consciousness of error is encouraging, — it shows a measure of moral life in us.

"Self-rebuke is God's voice, his call to new effort, his promise of aid. It is to me a most sustaining idea, that I am always guarded by God, and shall receive more and more aid in proportion as I am receptive of it. When the sight or voice of a friend stirs up my spirit, when nature touches and elevates my heart, when a word from some inspired author reaches the depth of my moral nature, when disappointment corrects and purifies my views of life, &c.,—on all these occasions, I feel that God speaks to me. I see in them pledges of his earnest parental desire for my redemption. I see in them the workings of Omnipotence for my good, the breathings of his spirit, confirmation of its precious promises, that heavenly aid is most freely given to human weakness. I am strong only in my consciousness of union with God."*

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* To Mrs. George Lee.

CHAPTER VII.

HOME LIFE.

And now let us enter the home circle, and look upon the daily life of a man thus aspiring to oneness with God by reception of his influence and coöperation with his plans, thus longing for full illumination, thus universal in humanity, thus earnest for the emancipation of every brother, thus firm while liberal in justice, thus generous, compassionate, elate with hope, unchangingly faithful. In the following letter to his sister, Dr. Channing manifests the affectionateness which was the undertone of his harmonious character.

"As I advance in years, though I form new ties and am enlarging my interests in others, I turn to my early, and especially my domestic, friends with increasing tenderness. I find more to love in those I have longest known. This is a good sign. In truth, when I look on my own family, and make them a standard of the race, I feel that the accounts of human depravity must be exaggerated."

In the spring of every year, exhausted by his winter's work, and pierced by the raw east winds of the Massachusetts seaboard, Dr. Channing found himself compelled to revisit Rhode Island. In April, he writes to a friend: —

"This season is one in which I always lose strength, and am obliged to give up for a time my common duties. As soon as the warmth of the weather will admit, I shall retreat to the country, and there give myself three or four months' repose, that I may be prepared for a new campaign."

Another languid month has gone, and then he can thus pour out his grateful satisfaction in the sense of returning health and spirits: —

"I write you from our dear native island, — a spot which becomes more and more dear to me. Whilst the generation with which I grew up has disappeared, nature is the same; and even when a boy, it seems to me that my chief interest clung to the fields, the ocean, the beach. What I want at this season of the year is repose, and I know no part of our country which has more of tranquil beauty than this."

And again: —

"*August*, 1832.* I am spending this, as I do all my summers, about sixty or seventy miles from Boston, on my native island, called Rhode Island, a spot of which I suppose you have never heard, but which is to me the most interesting on earth. I believe it is universally acknowledged to be the most beautiful place on our whole range of sea-coast. It has one of the finest harbours in the world, and is situated in a broad bay, which embosoms many islands, of which this is the queen. Its surface reminds me more of the gentle, graceful slopes of your country, than any scene I have visited in America; and its climate is more English, being quite humid, though affording us often those bright skies of which you see so few in England. No spot in our country which I know has so equal a temperature. These advantages, together with fine beaches for bathing, make it quite a resort for invalids and the fashionable.

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* To Mrs. Joanna Baillie.

"My residence is in the very centre of this beautiful island, five miles from the town; and when I tell you that a son of your Gilpin, the celebrated writer on the picturesque, gave us some hints towards laying out our garden, and that it has been cultivated by Scotch and Irish gardeners, you will easily conceive, that, though we are so remote from you, our outward world does not greatly differ. In natural beauty, my island does not seem to me inferior to the Isle of Wight. In cultivation, it will bear no comparison. Our farmers are slovenly, spreading their labor over large farms, satisfied to live well, and caring little for posterity or for improvement. Here I spend four or five months annually, enjoying my tranquillity almost too much, almost reproaching myself for being so happy, when I am doing so little for the happiness of others."

It was extreme refinement of conscience only, that could have made Dr. Channing feel even a transient pang of self-reproach for these periods of involuntary retirement. The alternative each year was death or long repose. The thought constantly suggested by intimate acquaintance with him was, — "How is the frail body of this man kept living by his desire to finish his work!" The finest fibre only united the spiritual force and the material frame, and he felt no liberty to snap the tie till his mission was discharged. Duty governed him in the care of health, as in all relations. Feeling that early imprudence had made him an invalid, he husbanded conscientiously his scanty store of strength, though every year compelled to pay in weeks and months of inaction the penalty for exertions beyond his power, but which he felt no freedom to forego. The robust might have thought him a valetudinarian; but close observers could not but revere the touching patience and quiet resolution with which he daily, hourly, sacrificed desire to judgment, and curbed an aspiring, bounding temper to keep a gentle pace. Critics have blamed him that he left no large finished works. But they who were near him felt shamed by an energy, that, amidst such constant hindrances, accomplished so much. It is only by incidental allusions scattered along his correspondence for years, that one can form an adequate conception of the clog which hung upon him throughout his manhood. But justice to the noble spirit, who so uncomplainingly bore the load of mortality, demands that this fact of his unremitted physical depression should be fully understood. A few extracts from his letters will show the nature of his malady, and the gentle firmness with which he wore his fetters.

"*July*, 1825. The pulse, habitually languid, begins to fly under the exertion of preaching, and fever and increased indigestion follow."

"*Brookline*, September 16, 1825. Last night I found my usual sleep restored to me, which I esteem a great blessing. The tranquillity of the mind by day is certainly aided by its repose at night, and could I bring back the slumbers of childhood, I should not despair of getting something of a childlike lightness of spirit in my waking hours."

"*November*, 1825. I resume my public labors, though not without some cause of apprehension. The effect of my interesting engagements is to take away sleep almost wholly for nights. This has been one of the symptoms of my failing health."

"*June* 21, 1826. My labors yesterday exhausted me less than usual, and I am authorized to hope, perhaps, that a favorable change is taking place in my constitution. I know not when I have been as well as now; but I am not sanguine. Life and health are most uncertain. I allow myself no dreams of a long and prosperous future in this world. But I am not the less grateful for a bright and vigorous day because it gives no pledge of many such to come. The very feeling of the uncertainty of life increases its value. I certainly do enjoy it highly, and am interrupted by few anxious thoughts as to what to-morrow may bring forth."

"*October*, 1827. I have borne so long the burden of that half-health, which makes a man unable to say whether he is sick or well, and which restrains all the soarings and continued efforts of the mind, that I earnestly desire some release from it."

1828. "My health continues to form no small part of the discipline to which Providence sees fit to subject me. I have bright days, in which I form plans of extensive exertion, and perhaps my very ardor suddenly reduces me to a state of debility in which I hardly dare to expect ever again to accomplish any thing."

"*St. Croix*, April 6, 1831. I believe I must make up my mind to carry with me this feeble body to the grave. Sometimes, when I am obliged to stop in the midst of an interesting subject, I wish I had more health. But if we are to live for ever, we need not be impatient. That word *for ever!* Does it never break upon you with something of the power of sudden thunder, and startle you into a strange awe? O, how wonderful that immortality does not move us more!"

"*October*, 1831.* I have experienced during this depression of the body, what I have sometimes known before, a singular clearness and brightness of mind on the most interesting subjects. Without the least enthusiasm, or indulgence of imagination, I have thought of human immortality with a calm elevation and happiness which I think cannot be common. There was a jealousy and dread of a dreamy, visionary state of mind, and a deep consciousness that all emotions in view of futurity which could not be brought to mingle with and bear on common life were useless. The physiologists tell us, that in cases of this kind the nervous system, or whatever part of the body ministers to thought, is under some peculiar excitement. May it not be, that, in this depression of the animal life, the mind is more free from the influence of matter, is more itself, and gives us some earnest of what it is to be? One thing, however, I learn. If a change of the present animal system can give us such glimpses and enjoyments, what may we not hope from the spiritual body, the more refined organization of which Paul speaks?"

"*December* 17, 1832.† You express, as usual, solicitude about my health. After months of debility and sickness, I seem to be rising to greater firmness. I earnestly desire better health, that I may do something before I leave the world; yet if I must be an invalid, I know not how my lot could be a happier one. Though able to do but very little in the way of study and writing, I can enjoy the writings of others, and I feel the benefit of that moral and intellectual cultivation which makes all works of talent, on almost all subjects, interesting. Then I am surrounded by affectionate countenances and voices, and my apartment, looking out on a pleasant prospect, is as agreeable a prison as one could desire. I am not, however, altogether a prisoner. I go out in pleasant weather, a short distance, and were it not for the exhaustion attending moderate effort, I should not have a sensation to trouble me. I have only causes of gratitude."

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* To Joseph Tuckerman, D. D.

† To Mrs. L. Kinder.

"*December* 28, 1833. In truth, I have not, for a long time, had such health. I dare not draw upon it largely, and spend much of the day in exercise. Still, my progress, though turned to so little account, is a great good to me. To be able to move without a consciousness of effort in every step, and to study a little without entire exhaustion, is so much of a novelty, that I enjoy it more than the healthy do their perfect strength."

"*Philadelphia*, May 27, 1835. At this moment I am somewhat worn down by preaching two sermons two successive Sundays. There seemed a call for effort, and I do not regret that I made it; but I must suffer."

"*October* 14, 1836. You are right in reproaching me. I might have written you sooner, but there is a languor in convalescence which inclines me to postpone what is not a plain duty."

"*September* 1, 1837. On my return from Boston, I paid for my exertions by a fortnight's indisposition, but am well again and am trying to work."

"*Boston*, May, 1838. I have been taken from my labors for nearly two months, and am good for little, though slowly rising. I look forward to my retreat on the island with increased joy. In that quiet, I can use my powers with less injury than amidst the excitements of the city."

"*Milton*, June 6, 1838. I am not willing that my letter should be published, because it was written under much languor of body and mind, and, as far as I can recollect, does no justice to the question."

"*Oakland*, July, 1838. I must repeat the old story, — that I have gained little strength, and have failed in my attempts to bring something to pass. The last week was a lost one, so far as outward efficiency was concerned. The stomach failed me, and this is as unfavorable to exertion as a failure of the mind. We work by tools, and this tool of the body is more important than any other. But I have no despair."

"*August* 10, 1838. I thank you for your letters and communications, and should have answered you, had I had any thing to say. The truth is, I have been obliged to be quiet this hot summer, and to give rest to mind as well as body. My strength has come to me very slowly, so that I have given no thought to the subject on which you write. I feel its importance deeply, and hope to be able to give my views to the public. In the mean time I am in good heart, — never was farther from despondence."

1841. "The tract has been better received by the public than I had reason to expect, for I wrote under great languor, with a continual consciousness of inability to give sufficient force and expression to my thoughts. This is a cross I have often to bear, and yet some of my productions, which have been wrung from me by painful effort in hours of feebleness, have done good. My three Lectures for the Laboring Classes were written with the feeling of a feeble man carrying a load up hill; and yet I have testimonies from the mechanics of England to their usefulness."

Pains has been taken thus to exhibit Dr. Channing's constant feebleness of body, because, unless his physical condition is conceived, his character cannot be rightly apprehended. His seemingly inactive life was not a chosen, but an imposed, form of existence. Essentially, he was a person of strong will, keenly sensitive, large in affection, earnest in purpose, brave, though prudent, and indomitable in cheerful trust. Fluent in enthusiasm, guided on by a bright ideal, sympathizing profoundly with his race in their trials and struggles, refreshed in faith from on high, he was designed, apparently, to have poured abroad a river of good influence in varied action. But the accidents of birth in an age of unsettled opinions, and still more of a shattered constitution, diverted his energies into a broad, deep lake of contemplation. Regarding his life as a whole, and considering how he was hemmed in at once by speculative difficulties and bodily infirmity, it is indeed remarkable that he should have so identified himself with his fellow-men in all lands and conditions, and have made his power so widely felt. But to no one as to himself did his success seem partial; for he measured it by his grand designs. He knew only, that, under his circumstances, he had done his best, and humbly deferred to the ever-widening future the accomplishment of his hopes. This view of Dr. Channing is so interesting and instructive, that it may be well to illustrate its truth by quite full extracts from his correspondence. In nothing did his real greatness shine forth more purely than in his submission to the necessity of a comparatively passive life.

" *Boston*, June 28, 1824. Yesterday I preached without sparing myself, letting a great subject bear me where it would, and the exhaustion was only temporary. Can it be that I am to be spared to accomplish some of the labors on which I have set my heart?"

"*November* 12, 1824. Yesterday I delivered a short sermon without suffering. This I esteem among the very happy events of my life. It is true that infirmity and inaction, when appointed by God, are to be received as good, and I am persuaded that some of us are more deeply instructed in heavenly wisdom by being laid aside as useless, than by being left to successful and honored labors; but when our Master recalls us to his work, is it not right to rejoice?"

"*September*, 1825. I am on a visit at the island, almost too healthy to feel an easy conscience at such a distance from my duties. I have gained strength since my return, and would fain supply my past deficiencies. I sometimes hope that my exertions are to be greater than they have ever yet been."

"*October* 10, 1825. I have resolved on any sacrifice but that of duty, which health may require. I have hope that I may do something; but my thirst for study and exertion, which sometimes rises to a passion, must be indulged very moderately, if at all. It is all right, however. The Great Disposer knows our whole nature, and looks through our whole duration. I doubt not, that, if the present trial yields its proper fruits, I shall be ultimately a wiser and more efficient being than if I were to follow my own course now."

"*November*, 1825. Repose, repose, is becoming almost too favorite a word with me. It is to me food and medicine. I do not mean inaction, but a calm exercise of my powers and affections. The affections are about as exhausting as the intellect, and a little more so when strongly excited. I trust that I am not only to gain wisdom in this respect, but to put it in practice. I fear that a less animated mode of preaching may be less impressive. But the question is, if continued labor of a less impressive kind may not do more good than a few efforts, destroying the power of exertion, and followed by long intervals of relaxation. You see I am grown rational."

"*Rhode Island*, August 17, 1827.* I almost envy you the happiness of continued activity, and of such exertions as show their fruits. Most of us hope we do good; but we live by faith rather than by sight. Now and then we have affecting proof that what seemed to us lost seed has struck root, and that our words have found their way far into men's minds. You, from the nature of the materials you work upon, — to say nothing of your mode of working, — see striking changes. . . . . .

"I am still at this paradise, — for such Rhode Island is to me. I mean paradise externally, rather than internally. I do not find refuge here from the great conflict of human nature, from the war of 'the spirit against the flesh.' But to some minds quiet retreat brings advantages for that struggle. The Divine principle within us seems to be called forth by the marks of the Divinity in the creation, and the religion of meditation — not the highest religion, indeed, but still not worthless — is nourished. I am aware that a virtue which leans so much on outward condition is not to be compared with that which wins its crown on the field of battle, and grows stronger by exposure. But we must make our way as we can; and I trust that a temporary shelter does not disgrace a soldier of Jesus Christ. The effect of the quiet thought to which I give myself here is to make me more sensible to the thick darkness which overspreads the Christian world. I seem to discover as many errors in practical as in dogmatic religion. The false theology, which has prevailed for ages, is burying us still in night. But the corruptions which we are trying to expose in the popular system are perhaps but superficial, compared with those which remain unrecognized and which we all inherit. The true reformation, I apprehend, is yet to come. But enough."

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* To Joseph Tuckerman, D. D.

"*August* 2, 1829. My summer has been delightful, and the more so, because I have felt myself authorized to do a little more work. Not that I have brought much to pass; but exertion in my way is as necessary to me, as yours to you, and amusement hardly deserves the name or answers its end, when I cannot combine with it something else."

"*St. Croix*, February 12, 1831.* Hardly a day passes without spreading and strengthening my sympathies with the mass of men, the poor, the forsaken. The sights which are most familiar here turn my thoughts continually on the need of great revolutions in our present social order. The selfish, all-grasping spirit, which everywhere sacrifices the many to the few, or leaves the many to suffer without pity, or the means of improving their lot, must be resisted as it has not been.

"You are right in not being willing to exchange your daily walks for my luxuries and ease, though I was half angry and half amused at the manner in which you speak of my present situation. You seem to think I am acting the part of Corydon; but I never had any great relish for Arcadia. Man's business is among men; and if I have gone to solitudes, it was not to sigh among shades, but to use my little power as well as I could. To me the country is the best article in the *materia medica.* Its quiet is to me what sleep is to you. In society, I soon become exhausted. Earnest conversation makes me fevered, and so does breathing the close air of a heated, crowded room. I am obliged, too, to live more at home from the necessity of observing a regimen. I am at this moment losing in no small degree the benefit of a tropical climate from the difficulty of getting food which is nutritious to me. I am surrounded by delicious fruits and vegetables, which I can scarcely taste without injury, and what I most need I cannot easily procure. To one who finds so many little trials in society which he can hardly speak of, it is well to walk in a quiet, retired path. I have never found that my lonely way of life has alienated me from my race. On the contrary, I think that, to me, it has been the spring or nutriment of philanthropy. It has kept me from factitious tastes, and from attaching importance to the artificial distinctions of life......

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* To Joseph Tuckerman, D. D.

"You will ask me, I know, what I do in my retirement. I wish I could give a better report. I am not idle, but my mind is not in one of its productive moods. I am following out some great views. Do not smile or scold because I am only *accumulating.* Suppose I leave the world before communicating more. Think you that in the future world there will be no room for what we now learn? A mind which is toiling in solitude, if it gain truth, is preparing itself for larger reception of truth hereafter, and will be perpetually exalted and useful."

"*St. Croix*, March, 1831. I hoped some benefit for myself, though not very confidently, and I return much as I went. I have little expectation of any important change of my health. In another world I trust I shall renovate my youth; but for the present I must try to keep a sound mind in a weak body. I have health enough for enjoyment. Unhappily, I can *do* nothing, can make no considerable exertion, without paying the penalty. I say this because I know my friends abroad have some interest in my health."

"*St. Croix*, March, 1831. I make gradual progress; but I cannot boast of my exertions. The spirit is willing, but some strange difficulty belongs to my physical nature. I sometimes feel as if I should like to be examined after death, that the cause of my habitual languor might be detected. When I think of the little time which remains to me in this world, I feel almost a passionate desire to do something more; but I am rebuked, as soon as I begin any serious effort. I ought, however, to be grateful, that, if I can do little for others, I have so many capacities and means of pure enjoyment."

"*March* 31, 1832. I wish I could send you something from my own pen in return for your offering. But with a head teeming with great projects, my hand refuses to labor. The spirit is willing, but the physical nature is weak. I have nothing to complain of. In truth, I should be the last to murmur; for few conditions of life unite as many blessings as mine. I have strength enough for quiet enjoyment, but I sink under continued labor. This is too much about myself; but I wish my friends in England not to think me indifferent to the great cause of truth, freedom, and religion, which at this moment calls so loudly for all the energy of its friends.

"Despairing of being able to accomplish any considerable work, I have determined to publish soon a small volume of sermons. But for several weeks I have wanted strength to do any thing effectual towards preparing it. I am cheered by thinking that this is not the only state for exertion. As rest and sleep fit us for the next day's labors, much more may a life of submission and trust and fidelity under infirmity be a preparation for a nobler sphere hereafter."

" *Oakland*, June 20, 1832. I have been alone a week, and shut up by the weather two or three days. I love solitude, though not too much of it. 'Solitude is sweet,' says a French writer, 'but I want a friend to whom I can say solitude is sweet.' Still, you must not think that I have wanted resources, when left to myself. I have had, on the whole, a very agreeable week. I have been able to labor with some success a part of the day, and nothing makes me more grateful than this. Then I am never wearied in walking in the garden and woods. One forenoon I have spent on the beach, where the surf was high enough to give me what the boys call a *ducking*."

" *December* 28, 1833.* I look forward with strong hope to the time when we three shall meet again, and talk over all your sights, observations, &c. Shall we not do more than *talk*? As I tell you, I seem to be getting strength. If God shall give me ability to do something more for my race before I go, I shall be most grateful, and to work together with the friends with whom I sympathize most will be a new happiness."

" *February*, 1834.† In truth, who can sympathize with an intellectual laborer, disappointed in his dearest hopes, as I can? . . . . . Unhappily, the care of the body does not allow any systematic exertion of mind; and yet I do not complain. To myself, the mind seems to be making progress. I trust this is not one of the delusions of age. I am hardly old enough to be cheated in this particular."

"*June* 6, 1835. I made a great effort at Philadelphia, and preached three Sundays in succession, which I have not done for a long time. The people were anxious to hear, and I willing to take the hazard of unusual exertion; and, though I was much exhausted, I believe I did not suffer essentially. On these occasions I long for greater strength. Knowing, as I do, that I have great and life-giving truths to deliver, I want to toil as I have never done. I can tell you from my own experience, that a good constitution is the best estate; and you must do what you can to earn it. However, it is a comfort to know, that, where there is a fervent heart and a strong purpose, much may be done with a weak body."

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* To Joseph Tuckerman, D. D.

† To Orville Dewey, D. D.

"*July*, 1836. It is a simple, eventless life, as the world would think; but what events in a man's history are to be compared with the dawning of a great truth, or with the acceptance or resistance of some subtle temptation? I have been hard at work, and I think not unprofitably."

"*March* 13, 1837. It seems as if I might be spared for something, and yet I dare not be sanguine. I should rejoice to be able to complete some of my plans before leaving the world. 'But all is in His hands whose praise we seek.' It matters little where we are, if united to him by a true faith and love."

"*May*, 1838. In speaking as I have done of active life as unfavorable to the mind, when entered on so early, I do not mean to deny that many superior men have been formed in that school; but they carried into it a spirit of improvement. They *studied* men and things, and strove to understand the world in which they were living, and, as they had opportunity, carried on their studies by books. They were working-men *inwardly*, as well as outwardly."

"*June*, 1839. I do not want you to be the slave of society, to be unable to live alone; but I should be sorry to have you *unsocial.* I try in solitude to keep up my interest in my fellow-creatures; and my happiness, when alone, is found in labors for their improvement."

"*September*, 1839. The summer has left us, after having shed on us very many blessings. Without thought or labor I have been strong enough to enjoy. I feel daily that it is a privilege to live in such a world. Unhappily, society has dark spots, deep woes; and we have no right to forget them in our seclusion. I do not forget them. The thought of them often throws a shade over this beautiful nature. What would I not give, I am sometimes ready to say, for greater powers to improve and serve my fellow-creatures? But is it not wiser to use well what we have than to sigh for more?"

"*September*, 1839. I take singular pleasure in intercourse with young men who have given themselves to a spiritual end. Not that it is necessary to be a minister for this purpose. In a better age spiritual aims will pervade the lowest occupations. But at present a man must divorce himself to a degree from common pursuits, if he would keep alive a consciousness of his spiritual relations. The temper of the multitude is earthly and contagious."

"*Oakland*, June 22, 1840.* I have long learned to estimate life by the capacity of action it affords. To me there has been but one serious drawback on the enjoyments of a very privileged lot, and that has been the inability to work without an almost constant feeling of exhaustion; the inability to realize, as yet, any of my great purposes. When I see one who can work with spirit and joy, I could almost envy him; and yet I have never questioned that Providence which has laid on me my burden."

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* To Miss Harriet Martineau.

"*January* 1, 1842.* Since I wrote to you, I have had an illness, from which I have been creeping up slowly these two months. My suffering was nothing, compared with yours. Still, I take pleasure in remembering what a privilege it seemed to me to live, to think, to feel, to lift up my heart under much pain. It seems you cannot continue writing; but this will not make life useless. There is often a mysterious growth of the mind, which we can trace to no particular efforts or studies, which we can hardly define, though we are conscious of it. We understand ourselves and the past, and our friends and the world better. I have sometimes been tempted to think that the most profitable portions of my life were those when I seemed to do the least. There is a certain *maturity* of mind, distinct from acquisitions of knowledge, which is worth all the fruits of study, and which comes we hardly know how. Perhaps I give an individual experience; but I state it because it has helped to reconcile me to inaction."

"*Lenox*, July 13, 1842. I like much the Transcendental tendencies of our family. I do not wish that we were more like the world. At the same time I wish we may be *working* men, bringing something to pass, lovers of our race not in word and feeling only, but in act, and useful in the plain, homely walks of life, whilst we soar into higher regions. To unite noble speculation with wise and noble action, this is the idea of a great and good man; let us try to realize it. The old adage, that sails profit nothing without ballast, we must remember. Unhappily, some are all ballast, and go to the bottom; some of us are all sails, and run adrift."

"*Lenox*, July 23, 1842.† You are able to work in the good cause of truth and piety. Be grateful for your strength.

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* To Miss Harriet Martineau. † To the Rev. George F. Simmons.

Some of us have to stand comparatively idle. Our comfort is, that to 'stand and wait' is to 'serve,' and that, under the mysterious and all-wise Providence, our spiritual growth and influence may receive aid from what passes for inactivity."

"*Lenox*, August, 1842. You are in danger of suffering from high aims. Because they are not to be accomplished instantly, because the power of doing the whole work of life is not unfolded at once, you droop. You shrink from the toil and conflict by which this power is to be won. I understand what you mean by want of energy, for I have felt it all my life. The difficulty in both of us is physical, to a great degree. I hardly know what it is to do any thing without a sense of exhaustion. The light, buoyant spirit with which many men do their work, I have experienced just enough to make me comprehend it, and to be conscious of my want of it. What then? I have felt it a privilege to work, even under exhaustion; and power has grown by such work."

The expression used in one of the preceding letters, "The religion of meditation, — not indeed the highest form of religion, but still not worthless," gives us the clue to Dr. Channing's life. Cut off from the large range of study and action, which in early years had opened such glorious prospects, he meekly turned his powers upon the inward toils of self-purification. If not in this life, then in another would he, Heaven willing, be prepared for the widest services of love. In a letter to Dr. Tuckerman, he says with affecting humility: —

"*June* 17, 1828. I am now at my pleasant retreat, hoping for strength to do something, but not anxious. I feel that religion is obscured by much error, and I would do what

I can in the cause of reformation. But a deep feeling of deficiency and unworthiness checks the hope that God will employ me for the communication of any great light. It is something, however, to see the darkness, and to awaken others to seek a better future."

Calmly, trustfully, he consecrated himself to attain perfection, with an enthusiasm that grew more intense, the more it was concentrated. Neither restless nor sluggish, unanticipating, yet watchful, he trained himself to faultless practice of the scale of moral harmony, and serenity kept his faculties in tune. In the following words he but describes his own experience.

"There is a thirst for something better. This is the first step. The next is far harder, — I mean the resolution to make the sacrifices which progress demands. There is an immense space between desire and self-denial."

He obeyed in its strict sense the law, "Renounce and be blessed," and enjoyed in fullest measure the liberty of self-command.

A remarkable person, in a state of mystic illumination, while passing penetrating judgments on a number of distinguished men, once said of Dr. Channing, that "he was kept from the highest goodness by his love of rectitude." Very probably he would himself have verified the correctness of this criticism. There certainly had been periods of life when he had restrained himself, as he was aware, too stiffly, though every year of maturing virtue rendered him more free. But in his company the thought would constantly occur, "How much richer is the latent nature of this man than the manifestations of it which he allows to appear, or than he is himself aware of!" An earnestness, a susceptibility to profound emotion, an exuberance of sanguine cheerfulness, a chivalrous daring, a stern yet smiling heroism, a poetic glow, flashed out at times through his guarded evenness of deportment, giving promise of a higher style of greatness than that which he revealed. And yet, when one beheld his composed consistency, his attempered strength, most self-relying when least outwardly sustained, his presence of mind and foresight, his calm contentment, and, above all, his steady growth, the question rose, whether his energy of will and wisdom were not most displayed in this willingness to wait. Too early buds are blighted. His summer had not come. Seemingly he had sacrificed impulse to method, fulness of force to order; but had he not thereby attained to peace, "that highest and most strenuous action of the soul, in which all the powers and affections are blended in beautiful proportion, and sustain and perfect one another"? *

It was Dr. Channing's desire and purpose to write a book on the growth of a religious spirit, in which, in a partly biographical, partly didactic form, he would have illustrated his own experience in regard to the true function of conscience. He had discovered that the monarchical principle in human nature becomes despotic, when not checked by the representative element of the natural affections, and the constitutional law of enlightened reason. He had learned thoroughly the benefits of moral gymnastics in solitary self-discipline; but he had learned also that the useful exertion of all faculties combined, in pursuit of worthy ends amidst our fellows, is the highest training for symmetric goodness.

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* Works, Vol. I., p. 205.

A few hints from his private papers will show this tendency of his thoughts in later years.

"The idea of improvement, progress, perfection, must become plain, palpable, all-animating. It must inspire and quicken our desires. The whole force of the soul must be reserved for Love. This idea of celestial virtue, lofty, venerable, must fix the purpose of universal goodness, and sustain the firm resistance to all sin. The consciousness of being appointed for this sublime end is to give at one to the whole mind, to protect us from the debasing influences of selfishness, to communicate worth and beauty to the humblest duties, to kindle and elevate all our affections, to surround us with a sense of the charm, dignity, glory, of life, to lift us up, to carry us forward. We must devote the whole body of sin to death, and choose perfect goodness as our supreme end. The promotion of that virtue which is central and universal, that is, love in its purest form, secures most full and rapid advancement and mingles joy with every effort of self-control and of progress. The passions are never so easily subdued as when checked by a generous, disinterested, sublime purpose, with which the soul is filled."

"There is a mystery in the growth of the spirit, as of the body; and if we supply the needed nutriment, the process in each goes on without our consciousness. The moral nature is fed by right action amidst present duties, rather than by direct efforts put forth on the character. Improvement is less promoted by constant self-watching, than by a generous pouring forth of our minds and hearts on grand objects. Great men are produced by great ends. There is a danger of selfish sensitiveness to our own imperfections. The best remedy for habitual self-indulgence is to plunge ourselves unreservedly into some work of well-doing which involves hardships and demands self-sacrifice. We improve without intending, without knowing it, by mere intercourse with great minds. Perhaps direct effort is chiefly important as preparing us for these more gently pervading influences. The best growth is that which we do not rigidly determine. Accordingly, there is to be a wise abandonment of ourselves to good influences. We must not too anxiously seek self-formation. This may prevent free, natural development. There may be nervousness about spiritual, as well as physical health, a killing of our strength of will by medicines, a want of trust in wholesome aliment, air, exercise, and light. Nature, society, events, beautiful examples, all carry forward the mind open to good impressions. A latent consciousness of their benefits makes our surrender to their charm an act of virtue. We grow wise every moment without intending it, if our hearts are set upon perfection, as taste grows in the artist by communion with beautiful objects. A purpose may guide us without perpetual thought of it. We must put forth our full energy, we must seek a right direction of all our powers. But the great means of improvement is to prepare ourselves for the celestial light for ever shed abroad, for deeper insight into virtues, wherever manifested, for higher aspirations, however suggested, for the inward monitions which carry us onward, for inspirations, for Divine impulses."

"Reverie," said Dr. Channing to a friend, "was once the hectic of my soul, — meditation has been its life." In these constrained seasons of rest and retirement, when he was seeking to put away every motive, association, habit, that obscured with earthly fumes the firmament of the spirit, when amid inaction he was training himself to energy, resolution, self-sacrifice, courage, and in solitude was longing to extend and multiply his ties of spiritual intercourse with mankind, he was brought ever nearer and nearer to the living God. His trains of meditation, like ascending and descending angels, linked earth with heaven. Without mysticism, rapture, or any form of extravagant emotion, he felt that he was daily walking in closest intimacy with "a Being worthy of the heart's whole treasure of love, to whom he might consecrate his whole existence, in approaching whom we enter an atmosphere of purity and brightness, in sympathizing with whom we cherish only noble sentiments, in devoting ourselves to whom we espouse great and enduring interests, in whose character we find the spring of an ever-enlarging philanthropy, and by attachment to whom all our other attachments are hallowed, protected, and supplied with tender and sublime consolations under bereavement and blighted hope."*

Dr. Channing's private papers, as well as his published writings, are so pervaded by piety, that to select particular illustrations seems like attempting to condense from a single flower the ray that calls out its tints and perfume, while the earth and air are radiant with sunshine. Yet the picture of his life would be imperfect without giving one or two extracts as indications of this central trait of his character. It may be said, in a word, however, that with him devoutness was no fitful, intermitted state, a sudden summer between polar nights of apathy; his thoughts and deeds, conversation and social pleasures, as well as his solitary hours, were made perennially fruitful by a glowing consciousness of the Divine presence.

"I must be alive to God; I must feel the infinitely near connection that binds the spirit to the Heavenly Father. I must thirst for him, as the Perfect Goodness, — as the centre, fulness, fountain, of all that is great and lovely. The explanation of the habitual insensibility to God, in which multitudes live, is, that the state of mind into which they are forced by the present condition of mankind is hostile to the religious feeling. Amidst prevalent selfishness, we do not feel the *generosity* of the Divine love. But we can even now gain glimpses of the Perfection of which the law of right is the essence. God is the Infinite Moral Will, — pure, unmixed Goodness, — pure Reason and Love, abiding in the peace of calm, unchanging, eternal rectitude. We are to enter into the depths of his love to every living creature. To conceive vaguely of goodness is not enough. The Divine love is the love of a God, infinite love, infinite in its energy, intenseness, variety, extent, duration, its all-vivifying, all-recreating power. This love embraces, pervades, every being. It is universal, impartial, immutable. Does not such a love imply that every spirit is to be unfolded everlastingly? Should not every intelligent being be looked upon with infinite faith? Are we not surrounded by manifestations of the unlimited disinterestedness of God, which should fill our hearts with gratitude and devotedness? Let every being remind us of perfect good, of the interminable, glorious future, in which the light of the Divine love is to be shed abroad for ever more brightly throughout the universe. We can never form even a faint conception of the Heavenly Father, until we rise to the idea of perfect goodness as the fountain of a love that pours forth for ever rich, free, unbounded communications of its own blessedness, that warms, embraces, quickens, exalts all creatures. God is the ever-living, ever-animating centre of this glorious universe, from which we cannot in thought for a moment separate him. To strive towards this Sovereign Moral Will, to commune with him, is our highest good, our supreme end, our immortal life."

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* Works, Vol. I., p. 204.

"Is the all-sacrificing love of Jesus Christ the manifestation of Divine goodness most suited to move us, most within reach of our hearts? Is it by living in this, and conforming ourselves to this in daily life, that the glory of the All-loving Father most fully beams on us? Is sympathy with this love of Christ a revelation of God to our hearts? Is it through a like sacrifice that the true sense of the All-Good is to be unfolded within us? We must have the faith of Jesus in the *divinity* of duty. This spiritual act of faith, carried out in the performance of duty, will open to us a heavenly glory in goodness. God's *will* must be trusted and obeyed; then does he come forth to us, manifest himself to us. Do we love him by feeling his presence, or feel his presence by loving him? The love of God must be sought from love, from a conscious union with him, that thirsts for its own increase. His goodness calls us to goodness, to all that is lovely, generous, great, self-sacrificing; and goodness exercised creates new capacities for goodness; we grow by beneficence. God hides himself from us, that our love to him may be moral, rather than instinctive, selfish, personal. He reveals himself as the inspirer of conscience, as the fulness and fountain of virtue; and he cannot be loved, except as virtue, goodness, moral perfection, is loved. Is not the very spirit of piety the devotion of the soul to moral good? Our Father, the Father in whom Christ dwelt, is not so much to be thought of as the Creator acting abroad, but as acting within, the life of our spirits, the awakener of love. In the immensity of the universe, and its countless, endless blessings, we are to see emblems of his spiritual interest in his spiritual children. All his perfections bring him into nearest union with every soul. Moral consciousness only can help us to comprehend the infinite interest of the Father in every individual spirit, his desire for its unbounded glory, progress, felicity. His love can be conceived of only when we feel that the soul by its moral endowments is fitted to bear God's image in goodness, and to ascend for ever and ever in immortal love."

"To see God, to know him, is not to see any thing outward, but to recognize him as a spirit in all his acts, as the designer in all his designs, in every thing and event to perceive the present, living energy of the Heavenly Father. The universality, infinity, impartiality, perfect justice, perfect love, of God is to be acknowledged throughout all processes of nature and humanity. He is Light; we are to behold his bright revelation of himself in his use of all creatures. It is by viewing all things as coming from the spirit of God, that we are to learn his boundless knowledge and inexhaustible love. The infinite connections which unite all creatures is the sign of God's all-pervading energy. The animalcule lives by the operation of infinite laws. Until we combine all finite particulars in the idea of the infinite unity, — until we look at the design of the Heavenly Father, in the whole creation, to awaken the infinite principle in man, to train up his spiritual children to immortal goodness, — until we see in all his laws a welcome summons to universal, disinterested love, — we cannot know God. To see God in the universe is to see in it the unity of one infinite thought, purpose, spirit, pervading it, — a glory of goodness brighter than all suns, — a harmony of power more majestic than all the combined forces of creation, — a happiness richer than all means of happiness, — a love which in itself is joy. To know God, we must consider his great end, which is to unite all beings by universal justice and love, — to bring all spirits into harmony by moral bonds, — to reconcile all that is partial, narrow, selfish, separate, — to make all spirits one by love."

"Prayer gives intensity to the consciousness of our connection with God, — lifts us out of our narrowness into communion with the Infinite, — teaches us to regard our interests as embraced within the immense designs of Providence, — opens to us a view of our relations to the universe and all spirits. We come to Him who has the well-being of all creatures in his control, in whom the whole good of the universe is concentrated. Can we approach him absorbed in selfish wants? We come to the Spiritual Father, who desires our perfection, whose law of rectitude is immutable, whose will of goodness is supreme, who abhors evil. Must not every desire become purified in such a presence? God always regards us in our connections with other beings; every gift bestowed upon us or withheld from us will affect them as well as us. Should not our petition be, then, to receive only what the Universal Father sees to be best for all as for ourselves? The true spirit of prayer is a submission of ourselves to the good of the whole, to the purposes of Infinite Love."

These fragments, from manuscripts which might fill volumes, must suffice here to show how truly — to use his own words — Dr. Channing had attained, "in the universal action of the soul, to conscious harmony with God and the creation, an alliance of love with all beings, a sympathy with all that is pure and happy, a surrender of every separate will and interest, a participation of the spirit and life of the universe, an entire concord of purpose with the Infinite Original."* It was from the centre of all-creating, all-redeeming, all-sanctifying goodness, that he sought habitually to regard events and persons. He longed to be made wise with the science of Divine order in its progressive developments. He trained himself to be, in the highest sense of the word, *just*, to escape from partiality and prejudice into the open air of truth, to see the relative worth of objects and occasions, to measure accidents by principles, to divine the future from the confluent tendencies of the past, to watch the ongoings of Providence. Through the still hours of his meditative summers, in untiring contemplation, he passed in review men and measures at home and abroad; and from the consciousness of his own failures and triumphs learned patience and hope for his race.

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* Works, Vol. I., p. 205.

In this effort to become "a follower of God, like a dear child," Dr. Channing found constant refreshment in communion with natural beauty. His letters overflow with allusions like these to his delight in outward scenes.

"I have been walking amidst our trees and flowers, admiring the perfection of God's works, and seeing his glory in all that he has made. O, could his rational offspring fulfil their purpose and reach their perfection, as do these humbler productions of his wisdom and love! But are we to despair? The plant is short-lived and not free. Can we expect a free, immortal being to develop himself as early and regularly as the material, finite germ?"

"I am now enjoying the great luxury of my life, — quiet in the midst of nature. I am debarred by my health from many of the pleasures of life, but this is a balance for all. It grows dearer, the older I grow, and I am old enough to know the value of a happiness over which time has no power. Here I feel my own spiritual nature, feel myself one with the universe. I suppose there is no great virtue in the sentiments of love to God and to man which spring up almost involuntarily in such scenes. But they help to reveal us to ourselves, and are prophecies which concur wonderfully with the promises of Christianity."

"I sometimes think that I have a peculiar enjoyment of a fine atmosphere. It is to me a spiritual pleasure, rather than physical, and seems to me not unworthy our future existence. Did you ever read the life of that noble Platonist, Henry More? He seemed to consider the breathing of the air on him as something *more* than an emblem of the Holy Spirit; and I can understand how he was led to associate with it some peculiar influence from above."

"You hope much aid to your intellect from the beautiful prospect your new house is to give you. Do not be too confident. The intellect, in the common sense of the word, may be less aided than the imagination and the heart. I am now spending the summer in the country, and I find myself lured perpetually from my books and papers to saunter among the shrubbery, to listen to the wind among the branches, to eye flowers whose names I cannot remember, to let the affections rise or expand at will. I begin to think there is more wisdom in these affections than in much that people call philosophy; but perhaps you have not lived long enough to learn this, and may blame your beautiful prospect for troubling the intellect."

"I hope you enjoy this beautiful September as much as I do. What a blessing such a day as this is! So much a creature of the senses am I still, that I find on such a morning that it is easier to hope in God, and to anticipate a boundless good for my race."

"You want to hear our news, but the best and happiest life is that which gives nothing to speak of. My life is more and more inward, and this cannot be thrown into the shape of news. How can I convey to you the music of the trees this moment in my ear, made by a fresh south wind after a shower last night? And yet this is one of my events.

Do you understand me, when I say that this solid earth and all that it contains seem to me more and more evanescent, at the very moment that they reveal to me the Everlasting ?"

"I hope you carry your spirituality into nature, that you feel the sacredness of nature, that you see in it the infinity of its Author, that its vast laws expand and elevate you, that you recognize in these the expressions of the highest truth."

"The return of spring is more interesting and touching to me than in former years. I certainly do not love nature less, but more, as the time approaches for leaving it. Is not this a sign that I shall not leave it, that I am preparing to enjoy it in higher forms ?"

Thus inwardly and outwardly at peace, life continually opened before Dr. Channing more rich in beauty. He surprised one by his expansiveness. Each year, in look, movement, tone, manner, he seemed younger. His interests grew fresher and more varied ; his sympathies more quick and pliant. He learned to trust good impulses, threw the reins loose on the necks of his tamed affections, and allowed himself freer enjoyment. By increasing purity and harmony, he became ever more at home in the universe. This bright youthfulness of spirit thus manifests itself : —

"*March* 5, 1826. To me the season has been a golden one, for I have been able to work a little, to preach more than I have done for years, and to resume partially my old habits of application. I ought to say, that I find life a gift increasing in value. I have not found it a cup foaming and sparkling at the top, and growing vapid as I have drunk. In truth, I dislike altogether this old-fashioned simile. Life is not a little cup dipped from the stream of time. It is itself a *stream;* and though at its birth it may dance and send forth cheerful murmurs as it does not afterwards, still it is intended to flow, as it advances, through more beautiful regions, and to adorn its shores with richer verdure and more abundant harvests. Do not say that this end is frustrated. I do believe there are multitudes who have not found infancy and youth as happy as later years."

"*Oakland*, September, 1828. I look back on my summer with much pleasure. To me it has been a bright one. I have seldom had my powers more at command; and the health and cheerfulness of my family, and the enjoyments of solitude on the sea-shore or in the fields have given almost a perpetual succession of agreeable emotions. I welcome and am grateful for such pleasures; perhaps the more because I do not look forward to them. I live as in the midst of death, expecting to stay here but a short time, and knowing that suffering may fill up this short space. There is not quite the joy of surprise, but something unexpected, in this calm and blessed flow of life."

"*Oakland*, June 29, 1834. Our cup runneth over. Life is truly a blessing to us. Could I but see others as happy, what a world this would be! But it *is* a good world, notwithstanding the darkness hanging over it. The longer I live, the more I see the light breaking through the clouds. I am sure the sun is above them."

"*Boston*, November 16, 1834. My children are growing so fast, that they are constant remembrancers to me of my having made progress towards another world; and yet I cannot feel old. It is by reason, not sensation, that I am reminded of my age. I never felt less like leaving the world, and yet I cannot continue long. Happily, the future opens on me still more brightly. Immortality seems to me yet more real; and, whilst I have much to attach me here, I desire a better life. Without being discouraged as to the prospects of society, I feel that neither of us can hope to see so much of heaven on earth, as to make us wish to live always here. What infinite thanks we owe to Him who has brought life and immortality to light!"

"*Boston*, 1837. There are clouds not a few in our sky. But I have lived too long to be surprised, or to repine at this. It seems to me that existence continues to be an increasing good, — that the longer I live, the more I enjoy; and I incline to believe that this is better than a life of unvaried gratification would have been. The spring is just opening upon us, and this season has long awakened in me most delightful sensations. I sometimes look around, and feel as if the mere privilege of viewing the heavens and the earth were enough to constitute existence a blessing."

"*Oakland*, 1839. Indeed, life has been an improving gift from my youth; and one reason I believe to be, that my youth was not a happy one. I look back to no bright dawn of life which gradually 'faded into common day.' The light which I now live in rose at a later period. A rigid domestic discipline, sanctioned by the times, gloomy views of religion, the selfish passions, collisions with companions perhaps worse than myself, — these, and other things, darkened my boyhood. Then came altered circumstances, dependence, unwise and excessive labors for independence, and the symptoms of the weakness and disease which have followed me through life. Amidst this darkness it pleased God that the light should rise. The work of spiritual regeneration, the discovery of the supreme good, of the great and glorious end of life, aspirations after truth and virtue, which are pledges and beginnings of immortality, the consciousness of something divine within me, then began, faintly indeed, and through many struggles and sufferings have gone on.

" Since beginning this letter, I have visited a beach, the favorite haunt of my boyhood. There I saw the same unchanged beauty and grandeur which moved my youthful soul; but I could look back only to be conscious of beholding them now with a deeper, purer joy. So much for what would be called an unhappy youth! Perhaps I owe to it much of my present happiness. I know not that in indulgence, prosperity, and buoyant health, I should have heeded the inward revelations or engaged in the inward conflicts to which I owe so much."

" *Oakland*, 1839. There is a pleasure in the consciousness of progress, however slow. To see something growing under our hands is a solace, even in great weakness. During this summer, I have been able to give little more than an hour a day to my work; but I have been all the happier for my pains.

" I love life, perhaps, too much; perhaps I cling to it too strongly for a Christian and a philosopher. I welcome every new day with new gratitude. I almost wonder at myself, when I think of the pleasure which the dawn gives me, after having witnessed it so many years. This blessed light of heaven, how dear it is to me! and this earth which I have trodden so long, with what affection I look on it! I have but a moment ago cast my eyes on the lawn in front of my house, and the sight of it, gemmed with dew and heightening by its brilliancy the shadows of the trees which fall upon it, awakened emotions more vivid, perhaps, than I experienced in youth. I do not like the ancients calling the earth *mother*. She is so fresh, youthful, living, and rejoicing! I do, indeed, anticipate a more glorious world than this; but still my first familiar home is very precious to me, nor can I think of leaving its sun and sky and fields and ocean without regret. My interest, not in outward nature only, but in human nature, in its destinies, in the progress of science, in the struggles of freedom and religion, has increased up to this moment, and I am now in my sixtieth year."

"*Oakland*, September, 1840. I am growing old, as I hear, though I cannot acknowledge it to myself. But I have so little time to spend on earth, that I wish to see more of my friends. I should rejoice to leave recollections which will cheer them, and which especially will aid them to prepare for the close of their own journey."

"*June*, 1841. We old folks seem to have the advantage of the young. We can enjoy with less excitement. I find, too, a great increase of satisfaction, as I advance, in the clearer sight of things which time and reflection have brought. In my earlier years, I see that I walked in a mist. Shall we make this discovery perpetually as we ascend?"

"*Oakland*, July 31, 1841. I incline to visit new scenes. As we grow old, we must resist the chains of habit. Peace be with you. Live daily, constantly, with a high purpose, putting forth moral energy in the minute conflicts of desire with the sense of right. This is the way to keep our spiritual weapons bright and strong."

"*Boston*, December, 1841. My cheerfulness is of that quiet, uniform character which makes no show on paper. It does not depend on good stories, queer speeches, laughable incidents; nor is it made up of flashes, but shines gently, steadily."

"*January* 1, 1842. I wish you a happy new year, and many, many such. I say *many*, for I trust life is to be to you what it has been to me, an improving gift. Youth is not its happiest period; at least, it ought not to be."

But it was not for his own sake only, and for the peaceful spiritual discipline which he there enjoyed, that Dr. Channing prized so highly his summers at Oakland. The consciousness of youthful freshness inspired from natural beauty made him anxious to secure for his children the opportunity of passing as large a portion of the year as possible in the country. He felt that he had owed so much, from boyhood onward, to the silent teachings of the universe, that he could not bear to see the young spirits intrusted to his charge cooped up in the brick prisons of our overgrown cities. Fidelity to private relations was thus a strong motive for his periods of retirement. He was a most devoted and loving father, and an ever-wakeful spirit of duty watched over and guarded his parental affections. Almost at the close of life he wrote: —

"The more we recede from childhood, the more our hearts are drawn back to it by tender remembrances, by the contrast of its beauty and joyousness with what we see of later years, and by our increased knowledge of the solemnity and grandeur of that existence on which the little creatures are entering so unconsciously. I am a parent, but I sometimes feel as if the affection which springs from *thought* were stronger than that of instinct."

Extracts from his letters will best enable us to understand his relations to his children, and his views of their education.

"*Portsmouth, R. I.*, July 10, 1824. I have not forgotten the cordial pressure of your hand the night before I left Boston, when I told you I had heard of my family on their way home, and was to join them the next day; and now that they are round me, and my heart is overflowing with a quiet joy, I feel as if I should find some relief and a new delight in talking to one whose sympathy is so dear to me.

"Both the children have one sign of health, which I hope is a sure one, — an exuberant, irrepressible animation. It seems to be one purpose of infancy, that it should be a fountain of spirits and exhilaration for the drooping and careworn travellers of adult life. If any thing in life makes me wonder, it is the immense difference produced by a few years between the child and the man. I cannot, by any effort, revive the feelings of my infant mind. The holiday life of my children strikes me as a mystery. When I see the slightest excitement stirring up the living principle in them so powerfully, when I see the flexible, graceful form, so instinct with spirit, and the countenance so beaming, so lighted up with joys and hopes as transient and swift-winged as they are absorbing, I see a mode of existence so different from my own, that it perplexes as much as it delights me. Perhaps I do not enjoy it the less for comprehending it so little. I see a simple joy, which I can trace to no earthly source, and which appears to come fresh from heaven. It seems to me, I could never have been so happy as my children are. I feel as if so bright an infancy, though not distinctly recollected, would still offer to memory a track of light, as if some vernal airs from that early paradise would give vague ideas of a different existence from the present.

"When I see my children living without end or aim, and living so happily, I almost distrust that laborious wisdom on which we adults plume ourselves. Does not the Christian become a child in the sense of acquiring the lightness of spirit, the freedom from anxiety, which belongs to infancy: the child owing it to temperament and ignorance, the Christian to a strong faith, — the child casting its little burdens on a human, the Christian his greater ones on a heavenly parent? I wonder, too, if the good man, as he advances in truth and goodness, does not revert to the guileless simplicity, the quick commerce between the soul, the countenance, and the voice, which belongs to infancy, — whether he does not find that the reserve, caution, policy, prudence, to which men look for success, are shallow expedients, the offspring of a purblind wisdom, and that the ingenuous exposure of a pure and disinterested mind is the surest way to all noble ends which was ever discovered. Dear ——, what a letter! You will think me half as much a child as those I have written about. I have spoken of the joyousness of our first years as poets do of spring, — forgetting, that, with the flowers and balmy gales, there are chilly winds and days of gloom. But *you* will not be an unkind critic, especially when you remember that I have exchanged the stillness of a deserted house for the gay sounds and affectionate faces which now surround me."

1824. "Our connection with children was meant to be a happy one, and for that end a confiding spirit is necessary. It is unavoidable, at their age, that they should fall into a great many errors, and that, under the influence of strong, absorbing impressions, they should seem to lose the good ones which we have made. But the very volatility that troubles us should give comfort; for these new and threatening impressions will soon in turn resign their place to others, and we must wait in hope for the propitious moment of renewing and deepening those which seem to have passed away."

1824. "As to the period of beginning religious instruction, much must depend on the capacity of the child; and I have the general impression that much more is to be done towards developing the religious character by awakening feelings and forming habits congenial with piety, than by making this the subject of direct inculcation. Filial affection and gratitude, general kindness, and the sense of duty are excellent preparatives for religion, and may be called into exercise before any just ideas of God can be given."

1824. "To give children a vague idea of their being very important personages is undoubtedly pernicious; but there are some respects in which they are indeed very important, and this, being true, cannot be expressed too plainly. Let them on no account think themselves more important than other people or than common people. Let them not think their animal gratification, or their appearance, or even their manner, of great consequence. But as to their minds, their hearts, their characters, these are of infinite worth, and they ought to see that they are so regarded. I believe that children do suffer by an indiscriminate care, which makes them think that every thing which affects them deserves great consideration and sympathy from others, and hence a blind vanity and conceit, and all kinds of selfishness. But letting a child see that we are most deeply interested in its habits, dispositions, course of life, and inward progress, can only do good. Whilst we treat their passing pains and pleasures as very secondary, and their pretty faces and pretty airs as worth no notice, they should see that in some respects they are every thing to us, the objects of our ever-increasing solicitude."

1824. "I very much incline to the belief, that insensible or indirect education is more important than that which is direct; and on this principle, the surest method of making your children what you wish is to become so yourself."

1824. "I would not have you severe, and do not want you to multiply acts of authority. But your laws must never be evaded or violated. Let it be seen and felt that obedience is necessary, inevitable, at the same time that efforts are used to render obedience a tribute of reason, conscience, and the heart, by expressing affection in our commands, and discovering the grounds of them when practicable."

1824. "I incline more and more to the use of generous motives, and of appeals to the best feelings in children. We must call out in them the sense of honor. I believe that the seeds of generosity may early be sown, and that the sensibility to what is good and great may early be awakened. When you look back into very early life, do you not discover the traces and dawnings of some truly exalted sentiments?"

1825. "For their sakes we must educate ourselves. Do not let us forget that the habitual state of mind and feeling which we express before them will do more, vastly more, than any direct instruction, to form their character. Let us strive, then, to give to our own sentiments and motives the elevation which we wish our children to possess."

1825. "Sometimes I think that the clouds are lifted a little from the subject of education. We know too little of the *perfection* of the human being, and of his manifold nature, to judge very clearly of the means to that great end. But we must feel that our nature has a better guide and wiser protector than ourselves. We must follow our light, be it more or less, confiding to a higher power, and new gleams will break upon us. The defects of our shortsightedness will be more than supplied by Omniscience. Here I anchor my soul. I feel myself more and more lost in the immensity of God's system, — more ignorant, blind, helpless; but I do not despair. There is infinite intelligence watching over one and all, an intelligence which has decreed to make us all partakers of itself, if we are true to the incipient light which now dawns upon us, and which will be in the place of our own wisdom, wherever the narrowness of our faculties forbids our self-direction."

1825. "How are children formed to graceful manners? Can art, teaching, education, do much? A certain flexibleness of the frame seems necessary. Some men's joints can never be made to move easily. In addition to these, is there not needed a certain taste, tact, quick perception of the graceful, which can as little be taught as a sense of natural beauty? I have no doubt that what we call good manners may be taught, and they are very important. But that charm which we call grace, which takes captive the mind of the spectator, which is to be felt rather than defined, how is this to be communicated? One would be inclined to think that it is connected with delicacy of mind; and yet I fear that I have seen it in some who want this inward refinement. I should rejoice to see this gracefulness, which survives beauty, throwing its mild lustre over our children."

1826. "I have no disposition to make prodigies of them, but it is hardly possible for a parent not to think his children somewhat remarkable; for the constant turning of his mind to them enables him to see what is invisible to others. . . . . . They have made progress hitherto not so much through any positive exertion as by our care to remove obstructions to the free development of their powers. I am persuaded that we shall do them more good by improving and exalting our own minds than by any other way, and I hope that this motive will not be lost upon us. The character of the child is formed very much by a silent, insensible influence. Its moral sense is unfolded and strengthened by living among those who are habitually alive to the good and beautiful, to whom duty is the supreme law, whose interest and pleasures are manifestly postponed to the will of God and the good of others. Let us subject our children as much as possible to this kindly contagion. . . . . .

"I am persuaded that children should not be restrained much in conversation, except in company, when they ought never to be troublesome. They should be encouraged to talk freely, and not always blamed when they talk improperly; for what a parent needs is, to see the *whole mind and heart* of a child, without one disguise. The old system of reserve had the bad influence of shutting up children in themselves. Entire confidence cannot grow up without much tenderness in the parents to the follies and immature thoughts and improper feelings of children in conversation. . . . . . For their sakes we must cultivate society, and make our house the resort of people whom we wish them to love and resemble. I am persuaded that the characters of children are greatly swayed by the circle in which their parents move. How many born and brought up in an atmosphere of vanity, fashion, self-indulgence, catch the spirit of society so early, that the love of dress and show and idle amusements seems innate! Children soon see what visitors are most esteemed."

1826. "I do not wish to make our children extraordinary, and yet I do wish that they should differ from the common standard in many respects. Are they not learning to think, act, and talk as the multitude do? Are we aiming to imbue them with that loftiness of views, hopes, purposes, which distinguishes Christians? Are we just to their present capacities? Without straining their minds, may they not be incited to greater concentration of attention, greater endurance of pain, greater exertion for themselves and others? I fear, on the one hand, anticipating the natural development of the faculties and affections, and injuring them by a forcing system, which may yield premature, but dwarfish, unsound fruit; and, on the other hand, I tremble lest, whilst we wait, the mind may form low and selfish ideas of happiness, and we may lose the best season of laying the foundation of vigorous exertion, self-denial, disinterestedness, and piety."

1826. "I am inclined to prefer very much the *oral* method of instruction, if I may so call it. Could we use books less and talking more, one of the chief objects in early teaching would be attained more certainly, — I mean *distinctness of conception.* I attach as much importance to this as Mrs. Hamilton, and, in truth, her views on the first steps of intellectual development agree with my own, perhaps, more than any I have seen."

1826. "My love to ——. I hope he will heighten all his enjoyments by moderation, innocence, and the resolute sacrifice of gratification, whenever it interferes with duty. *Duty*, — that must be his guiding and guardian angel."

1826. "Nothing but *time* can give us a feeling of security as to the character of the young. We begin, perhaps, with ascribing a kind of omnipotence to education, and think that we can turn out a human mind, such as we wish it, almost as surely as a mechanic can turn out from his machinery a good piece of work. But we learn, as we grow older, that the human mind is more complex and delicate in nature, and especially more independent and self-active, than we had imagined. Free-will, that glory and peril of a rational being, belongs to the child as truly as to the man; and the child must be the chief agent in the production of its own virtue, and it has power to resist all influences. This is right. It is well that no mind is put into the hands of another to be moulded at pleasure."

1828. "I believe much in giving the young the elements of every science or branch of knowledge. I have never learnt any thing which has not been useful to me, and I often groan over the deficiencies of my education. —— would probably slight the physical sciences, and give himself to moral ones and to general literature. But physical science is of great value. I lament that I cannot keep pace with the discoveries of the age. The universe is a divine volume, and I wish I could look on it with a more intelligent eye. Were I able to be a student, I should devote regularly a part of my life to the pursuit of natural science."

1829. "I dislike boarding-schools as much as you can; but I wish my children to mix freely with those of their own age; nor have I many fears, whilst they come home, after every talk or play abroad, and lay open to us the impressions they have received. I believe we must try children a great deal. When I see amidst what infinite influences, impulses, trials, vicissitudes, we are all plunged by our all-wise Parent, I feel that by an anxious caution, such as I sometimes see, I should fail to act in his spirit, and to co-operate with his providence."

1829. "Gray has given us a volume on childhood in that line, 'The tear forgot as soon as shed'; but when he adds, 'The sunshine of the breast,' he gives the idea of too calm and steady a happiness for that age. The sun of childhood is like that of an April day, when the light darts through broken clouds, and brightness and shadows chase one another across the fields, and the rain falls from a beautiful sky."

1832. "How important a branch of medicine is yet to be created! I mean that which shall study the tendencies of the constitution in childhood, and prescribe the means of counteracting hereditary disease. Might not many fine minds be preserved by such care?"

1835. "In one respect, at least, I possess singleness of mind, and that is in regard to my children. I want their good singly, and a friend could not make me more grateful than by giving me any information about them, however painful, by which I can aid them."

1835. "Remember that it is the distinction of a man to govern himself, and that a man who cannot keep to his resolutions and pursue his course of study or action firmly and steadily must take a low place in the world, and, what is worse, in his own esteem.

"I beseech you in every temptation to be true, honest, frank, upright. Whatever you may suffer, speak the truth. Be worthy of the entire confidence of your associates. Consider what is right as what *must* be done. It is not necessary that you should keep your property, or even your life, but it is *necessary* that you should hold fast your integrity.

"Enter on the school with the firm purpose of obeying *all* the laws. Do nothing which you need to hide. Make it a matter of honor and principle to do nothing which can injure the institution of which you are a member. Breathe no spirit of disaffection into your associates. Be the friend of good order. If at any time you think yourself aggrieved by your teachers, go to them frankly, and urge your complaints calmly and respectfully.

"Treat your companions generously and honestly; sympathize with them and seek their good-will as far as your principles will admit. But never sacrifice these. Never be laughed out of your virtue. Take your ground openly, manfully, and you will at length command respect. Do not let your companions depress your ideas of right. They cannot do you a greater injury.

"Reverence God, love him, and live as in his presence. Every morning you will be remembered in our prayers. Every morning remember us in yours. At that hour let us meet at the mercy-seat of our common Father."

These extracts show the blended firmness and freedom, cordiality and dignity, with which Dr. Channing treated his children. He sought to gain their confidence by perfect honor and truth in all their intercourse. He taught them self-respect and courtesy by the respectfulness and sweetness of his own manner. Strictly trained in his own early years, he had experienced the benefit of inflexible justice. His children saw that they must not dispute his positive commands, nor question his mature decisions. But the affectionateness of his look and tone, the familiarity to which he welcomed them, his disinterestedness and elevation above arbitrary caprice, gave a charm to his authority, and inspired a trust in his care and counsel, like reliance upon Providence. If in any case he found — which rarely happened, so deliberate was he — that his discipline had been injudicious, he would frankly tell his children that he had been unjust. He encouraged them to open their hearts, allowed full liberty in the expression of opinions, unfolded his own views, invited and listened to their objections, taught them to think. In a word, he made them his companions, and sought to win their unreserved friendship.

Dr. Channing's attachment to the young, indeed, was very strong, and continually deepening. In walking in Boston, one of his greatest pleasures was to pass among the crowds of children in the Mall, and to watch their bright looks and bounding movements. And in the summer he always endeavoured to surround his children with a group of young friends. In a letter he says, — "Our days are very bright and happy; the house is filled with children; and the more of good children, the better." He mingled in their scenes of merriment with cordial delight, contributed to every innocent sport, was inexhaustibly ingenious in inventing entertainment, and received them, on their return from rambles and pleasure-excursions, with a quick response to their joy, that seemed to rival their own buoyancy of spirit. As years passed on, and the children who summer by summer visited Oakland became youths and maidens, he read with them, made them companions of his walks, passed hours with them in animated conversation, became as far as possible their confidential adviser, discussed character, manners, private interests, and public affairs, and sought to raise them up to high-toned honor, purity, and benignant gentleness. A little child, during one of these visits, threw herself into the arms of an elder friend, and, smiling through her tears, exclaimed, "O, this is heaven!" so did she feel subdued by the atmosphere of love which he diffused. And a young girl wrote, — "He welcomed me with a kindness that took away all fear, a kindness that I felt I might trust for ever, for it was like that which must belong to spirits in eternity. His daily life is illuminated by a holiness which makes his actions as impulsive and peaceful as a child's; it is a happiness to be in his presence."

Dr. Channing's hospitality was nowise limited to the companions of his children. The spirit of his mother-in-law pervaded Oakland, and the rule was to keep every room filled with guests during the bright season. When the family mansion overflowed, friends found lodgings in the immediate neighbourhood. Visitors, too, from Newport, and strangers from abroad, sought his society. So that every pleasant evening was sure to find a circle of intelligent and refined persons collected in the parlours, piazza, and garden. In this kind of intercourse much that was most beautiful in the character of Dr. Channing appeared. The absorbing thoughts of the student, the reserve of the recluse, were put aside ; and with variety of information and of interests, gracious dignity, tolerance of all forms of character and opinion, and simple frankness, he welcomed those who sought him to participation in his truth and peace. His sympathy was most tender, delicate, discriminating ; his wisdom wakeful and large. One of his highly valued friends has spoken of his "perfect sincerity, his cordial reception, his politeness and courtesy, his habitual attention to the wants and habits of others, the warm pressure of his hand, his voice so rich and musical, the light of his deep-meaning eye." But it would be difficult to convey an adequate impression of the benignity, considerateness, and reverence which gave its peculiar tone to his manner. A freshness and brightness, as of the spirit-world, seemed to float around him and to sanctify all within its sphere. The feminine element, so strong in all men of genius, was dominant in his social nature. This attracted him, as has been several times remarked, to women. The romantic devotion, the untiring faithfulness, the grace, of his affection in the nearest relation made his daily life verdant with beauty. And at all times, and on all occasions, he showed himself the Christian gentleman. In his inmost heart he honored woman. To a sister he says : — " You women, I sometimes think, are in all respects our superiors. Certainly the world would be a dull place without you. Woman brought her love and her smile from Paradise, and these are worth more than the thornless roses and vernal airs she left." And, again, to Sismondi he writes : — " I am somewhat proud of my countrywomen ; and you, I think, have known some who will show, that, if man has degenerated in the Western world, woman has met a better fate."

With characteristic diffidence, Dr. Channing distrusted his power of giving pleasure in the social circle. " Before the multitude I am strong," said he once to a friend, " but weak before the individual." In this particular, as in others, he judged himself too strictly. Anecdote, wit, fancy, sprightliness, graceful trifling, indeed, made no part of his conversation, and would have been out of keeping with his refined spirituality. But the richness, originality, force, of his intellect and character appeared in their full beauty. He talked often better than he wrote, for he allowed himself more freedom ; and the quickening touch of another spirit, especially of a youthful one, awoke whole crowds of brilliant thoughts which lay entranced in the palace-halls of his memory. This topic has been eloquently treated by one whose personal experience gave point to his words.*

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* Dr. Dewey's Discourse on the Character and Writings of Channing, pp. 31 – 34.

"He sought and longed for a perfectly free communication; and no conversation interested him more than that which, in forgetfulness of him and of one's self and of every thing extraneous, was a kind of monologue, a kind of reverie, the purest and most abstract idealism. Least of all must it be supposed that there was any assumption about him, or any stiff formality or precision, — any thing that said, 'Now let us talk great talk.' Never. He did talk greatly, because he could not help it. But his manner of doing it, his manner in every thing, was the most simple, the most unpretending, imaginable. At the same time he possessed a nature the most truly social. He regretted any thing in himself or in others that repressed it. More than once has he said to me, 'I am *too serious.*' He longed to feel upon his spirit the free and genial breath of society. And all who have known him well must have observed, for the last fifteen years of his life, the increasing liveliness, versatility, and happiness of his social nature. The earliest days of his manhood were his darkest, — days of illness and seclusion. They spread around him a shadow of silence, and over many of his after days a shadow of reserve. But into that shadow every later year of his life seems to have poured new and more cheering light.

"I have alluded to his social intercourse; but to unfold his character, I must speak more distinctly of his conversation. It was the best image of himself, better even than his preaching or his writing; because it was the free, unrestrained, almost unintentional outpouring of his mind, and that on themes as elevated as those of his more studied efforts. I have said that he regarded preaching as the *great* action of his life. Conversation was the *ordinary* action of his life. It was not his relaxation, but his action. It was that which showed the man, as the daily pursuit, the daily business, shows other men. Prevented as he was by ill health, and perhaps by constitutional indisposition, from mingling with the ostensible enterprises and movements of the social world around him, this was specifically his mode of action, his daily vocation. And those who have not conversed much with him can scarcely know what he was, can scarcely appreciate the richness or the beauty of his nature.

"I wish it were in my power to give any idea of the extraordinary character of this conversation. On my first acquaintance with him, it was my happiness to pass a number of weeks under his own roof. His health was then delicate; he went abroad but little; but his mind was left untouched by the frailty of his body; and I found it constantly occupied and struggling with great questions. On the highest philosophy, on the highest religion, on the highest wisdom of life, all the day long he pursued the questions which these themes present, without ever slackening, or ever turning aside to ordinary and commonplace talk. The range of his subjects was as great as their elevation; from the most recondite point in philosophy — the difference between relative and absolute truth — to the forms of philanthropic enterprise and political development around him. But his favorite themes were *man* and the *New Testament*; man, — his condition and the philosophy of his condition; the New Testament, — Jesus Christ, his teaching, and the sublimest contemplation of God. Sometimes his mind ran upon the same theme, almost without interruption, for an entire week; yet there was never any weariness in listening but the weariness of exhaustion. His view of every subject was original. I do not mean that it was singular, but that it was his own, thoroughly digested in his own mind; and I wish it were a little better understood that this is the only originality possible to any mind. His imagination, at the same time, kindled every thing into life, presented every thing in new and multiform lights, spread around every point in debate such a world of illustration, that it seemed ever new, while it was ever the same. While it was ever the same, I say ; and yet to a mind suffused and overflowing, like his, with the very poetry of every theme, *that* is the trial point, — to adhere with severe, philosophical accuracy to the very question. To say that he went beyond the reach of all other men of similar genius is more than I do say; but certainly I was led to admire the remarkably sober and rational character of his understanding, even more than the beauty and wealth of his imagination. I must add, to complete the view, that the style of his conversation seemed to me as perfect as that of his writing; and I sometimes thought, at the close of a day, and I still think, that, if the conversation of that day could have been taken and printed from his lips, it would have conveyed to the world as striking a proof of his great powers as any thing that has ever proceeded from his pen.

"I must not leave it to be supposed that in all this there was any thing of the lecturer, the speech-maker, the maker of orations by the fireside; any talking, as if it were a duty to talk, wisely or gravely or instructively, or as if he thought light and gay conversation a sin or an offence: nothing could be farther from the truth. His conversation was singularly involuntary. The stream flowed and flowed on, because there was a fountain behind ; out of that abundance he spake. Or if he had any intent, his manner was as that of one who would clear up his own thought, or would submit it to the judgment of another. He never aimed apparently to be religious or spiritual or instructive ; and yet he was all these in the highest degree. You have heard of persons of whom it was said, that 'they could talk of nothing but religion.' The expression, you must have seen, was meant for praise ; but it is a praise which I have no desire to claim for the subject of our present thoughts. And yet his conversation, though he never entered upon it with that view, was the very religion of life, the very religion of nature, the very religion of politics, society, business, the religion of every theme, — that is, the highest and most sacred thought of every theme that he touched upon. So lofty, so commanding was his thought, so did it soar above all around it, so deep was its impression, that a conversation with him was often an event in life, a high beacon that shed its light over the track of future years. I remember conversations with him, I remember single phrases, and the tone in which they were uttered, as having made upon me an impression beyond the effect of whole volumes of moral disquisition. If I were asked to convey an idea of this impression by repeating his words, the attempt were vain, because it would be impossible to give the manner and the tone. But those may imagine something of this who remember the feeling awakened by his simple reading of a hymn; who recollect how, to a dull and lifeless hymn, or to that which had been made so by ordinary repetition, he communicated a character altogether new; how it became, as it were, a new creation, beneath the breathing fervor of his touching emotion and utterance.

" Indeed, there was this same singular impressiveness about his whole character. I have presented to you the picture of a man retired, reserved, isolated in appearance; of one who, for the most part, sat in his own dwelling, wrapped in meditation, or engaged in intellectual and elevated converse. But this was a being, though calm and reserved in exterior, all alive with energies, all alive with emotions, all alive with the feeling of what was going on in society around him, and in the whole wide world in which he lived. Calm he was in manner, self-restrained in fact, and in a degree as remarkable as his emotion was strong. Such was his self-control, that I thought at first it was coldness; the quiet and subdued tones of his voice fell on my ear almost like tones of apathy. But I soon learned to correct that error. I soon perceived that he was accustomed to put a strong guard upon his feelings, precisely because they needed that guard. I saw that his self-government was the fruit of much discipline. I had no doubt that in the bosom of his youth there had been a burning volcano. I had no doubt, though I never saw tears in his eyes, that there were tears in his heart. I know of nothing more touching than this restrained emotion of the strongest natures. And thus it was with every trait in his character; there was something in it that laid a powerful hold upon all who came within the sphere of its influence."

Thus tranquilly passed Dr. Channing's days at Oakland. Up usually, in the morning, before any of his guests were risen, his quick step was heard upon the gravel walk, and, looking from the window, one saw him, with his shawl or gown wrapped round his shoulders and the dogs gambolling by his side, passing amid the shrubbery, and stopping each moment to gaze, as a newly opened flower, a gleam of sunshine on the dewy lawn, or some passing bird scattering drops from the branches, caught his eye. His own expression — "When I see my friends after the night's separation, let me receive them as new gifts from God, as raised from the dead" — describes precisely the character of his greeting. The beaming eyes, the radiant smile, the grasp of the hand, the joyous tone, all spoke to the spirit, saying, — "What an inestimable privilege it is to live together in this glorious home which our Father gives us each day anew!" Without a word or look that was not as spontaneous as the delight of a child, he seemed so softened with religious sensibility, that his very "good morning" was a welcome to prayer. We stroll with him under the deep shade of the hedges, look into the green-house, admire the white lilies as with their pyramid of spotless bells they drink in the golden light, watch the bees as they buzz around the hive and come and go with their treasures, bend down a branch to peep at the young birds in their nest, bask for a few moments in the sunshine, and then enter the breakfast-room, where with perfect freedom the members of the household gather early or late according to inclination. His simple meal of coarse wheat bread and cream, with a cup of tea, is lightly despatched, and then he passes into the little room where his books and papers are awaiting him.

For an hour or more he writes down thoughts suggested in the wakeful hours of night or in his morning walk. The family are now ready for prayers, and guests and domestics, young and old, are assembled in the parlour. There, with the Bible upon his lap and some child by his side, whose hand and eye he guides across the page, he reads with the expressiveness of lively feeling a favorite passage from the Psalms or New Testament, illustrating obscure points with a few words of explanation. All then kneel, and a short petition is offered, so simple that the youngest and most ignorant can take in its meaning, so profound in sincerity that the most spiritual find their longings fully expressed, so precise that the special want of each member of the circle seems felt and remembered with appreciating sympathy. After a few pleasant words, on plans for turning the bright hours to the best use, the happy group disperses, the children or young people to their lessons, he to his work. Every hour or half-hour, more or less, according to the state of his health or the beauty of the day, he throws his gown around him, and takes a turn in the garden. At these times an observer is struck with the calm concentration of his look, and the deliberateness of his step. Occasionally the lips move, words are murmured, and slight gestures of the hand show the intense working of the mind. He feels the enlarging, purifying, illuminating influence of the sky, and air, and sun; and his inmost spirit responds to the harmonious growth of the universe. Calmer, brighter, in a few moments he is seated again at his table, and his rapidly flying pen shows how full is the current of his thoughts. A few hours of this labor exhaust him for the day, and, reluctantly putting aside his papers, he summons his young friends. They are reading together some history or work on philosophy, and in the summer-house or piazza the time glides swiftly away till dinner, in earnest consideration of the lessons of the past or the profound problems of existence.

And now the long summer afternoon invites all abroad to pleasure-excursions. If the wind is from the south, and the distant roar gives token that the ocean is swelled by the influence of a storm at sea, preparations are made for a visit to the beach. Happy the guest who is to ride with Dr. Channing in his chaise! It is a most plain vehicle, indeed, and the horse knows well that he may trespass almost without remonstrance on his master's good-nature; but who can regret the slowness of a drive which prolongs the delight of this conversation? Under the genial influence of nature and local associations, all restraints are loosed, and he pours forth from the springs of his experience the fullest streams of wisdom and graceful eloquence. One is irresistibly prompted to open the inmost secret to this father-confessor, to ask light on perplexed passages of life, strength in peculiar trials, and comfort in heavy sorrows. And this trust is met by a kindness so delicate, so impersonal, yet so penetrating, that the spirit feels that it is known even better than it knows itself. Morbid feelings, long prisoned in the breast, are healed and raised to vigorous freedom by the bracing air of his good sense. His disinterestedness, wide as the sky and horizon, makes small our anxieties ; and meannesses vanish beneath his love, as fog-wreaths melt away at noon. And now we are on the beach. With what untiring delight he watches the combing waves, the long sweep of foam, the glitter of the retiring waters, and lifts his voice in exultation amid the rushing sounds of wind and ocean ! But he is not content with the even swell upon the sands. He must show his guest the favorite spots among the rocks ; and as he springs from point to point, buoyant with enthusiasm, or stands watching while the billows gather up their force, plunge headlong, and are dashed back in spray, it is hard to remember that this eager guide is an invalid of threescore years. On other afternoons, a drive to Quaker Hill, to gaze abroad over the serene landscape and the island-dotted bay, or a stroll through the glen amid the cool shadows, or a ramble in the woods, or visits to friends in the neighbouring farmhouses, occupy the time till near sunset. That sacred hour he prefers to pass in a grassy path beyond the garden, where the view is unobstructed of the western heavens ; and he is slow to seek the house, until the last crimson cloud is pale, and the amber tints have faded. Music, to the charms of which he was every year becoming more sensitive, reading, charades and games with the young people, cheerful talk, consume the evening until his early hour of retirement, and then, summoning all to look at the moonlight and stars through the evergreens, he smilingly gives his benediction.

Thus passed the weeks and months of summer. Sunday brought the change of deeper quiet, abstinence from long excursions, solitude, and attendance at the neighbouring meeting-house. Without any superstitious reverence, Dr. Channing felt his own need of the day of rest. "It is the Sabbath," he writes; "the remembrancer of our immortality, the soul's holiday, when it should renew itself in happier regions. May it awaken a new consciousness of what we are and of what we shall be! How gratefully we should welcome this peaceful, sacred day! After the week's chafing cares and bustle, what a privilege to pause and be refreshed with thoughts of heaven! How should I rejoice to go with a message of life and immortality to my fellow-beings!" The members of his family took an active part in the Sunday School; and he himself preached, whenever his strength permitted. On these occasions, he used no notes, but appealed with hearty directness to his simple audience. But though the pleasure which he took in testifying his friendly regard to his neighbours made these services interesting to him, he found that his love of exact statements, and his habit of weighing opposite views, checked his freedom in extemporaneous discourse. He estimated his own success in this mode of preaching much more humbly, however, than did his hearers; for visitors attracted from Newport by his celebrity were often more impressed with the apostolic fervor and earnest piety and love of these village sermons than with the eloquence of his more elaborate addresses.

And now scarlet and golden leaves litter the paths, the dark evergreens rise sombrely, morning fogs lie heavy on the lawn, and chill autumn winds, through the thin hedges, remind him that his season of recreation is ended. To his society in Boston will he now carry back the truth he has garnered.

Arrived in Boston, Dr. Channing's first hours were always passed with his mother. Throughout his life, it has been seen how deep and constant was his filial affection; but every year seemed only to brighten its beauty with new reverence, tenderness, regard for her wishes, and assiduous care. In a letter of consolation he says:—

1827. "I can understand the affliction of which you write, though I have not experienced it. God has seen fit to spare my mother, but I cannot expect her to continue long, and I feel what a change will be made in my life by her removal. A mother's love is, in some views, more touching than any other. It has more of the immutableness of the Divine goodness. It is a love which began with our very being, and follows us all our days, which no waywardness can alienate, which burns undimmed to the last hour. And will it not survive the grave? Is not a true, disinterested parental love too like the love which God bears his offspring to be blotted out? Then our parents never die to us. The sacred tie may be strengthened rather than dissolved."

A few years later he wrote in his journal:—

"*May* 26, 1834. Yesterday my mother died. What a change in my condition! During my whole life, her love has been unremitted. For how many years has she borne me in her thoughts and heart! I have been privileged in so long ministering to her comfort, and I trust that she has received some happiness from my affection.

"And now the friend of my whole life, who amidst all fluctuations of other friendships never changed, with whose very being I was entwined, is gone. The first voice I ever heard I shall hear no more; the arms that first sustained me are motionless; the expressive eye is quenched. The room where for years I received her counsels and blessings holds only her lifeless frame. Her chair is vacant!

"Dear friend, whose heart yearned over me through all trials, thou art gone! I can no longer press thy hand, read thy countenance, hear thy words of pious gratitude, offer prayers with thee to our common Father!

"She, who gave a unity to my whole being, who by her presence, interest, affection, bound together all the events of my life, has left me. Who can be to me what she has been? To whom can I be what I have been to her? A tie is broken which cannot be replaced on earth. O that we could have prolonged her days in comfort! But she has gone to One who loved her better than we could. To His will we resign her."

To an absent sister he thus expressed his feelings: —

"*May* 28, 1834. This afternoon we followed mother's remains to Cambridge, where she wished to be buried by the side of her mother. It is at the grave that we feel what Christianity has done for us. What anguish would overwhelm us at the moment of committing the dust to the dust, if we felt that we were shutting up in everlasting darkness, silence, death, all that was our friend! I felt that the spirit was not there, that what we most loved and revered was not there. Thanks to God for the hope of immortality! How many of our friends are now gathered into that better world! It seems at such moments as if we could never again shut ourselves up in this narrow sphere.

"I think of her last year with great pleasure and thankfulness. Her character seemed to improve, which is not the ordinary experience of age. She extended, instead of narrowing, her interests, and found an increasing happiness in her social affections. The kindness of her friends touched her heart more and more, and she sometimes wanted words to express her gratitude to God for surrounding her with so many who were thoughtful of her happiness. Her conversation attracted as many visitors as she could see with comfort, and yet it never seemed to enter her mind that she was capable of giving pleasure. She ascribed to the pure good-will of others what was chiefly owing to herself. I look on her last days as her best days. We must be grateful that we have not waited for her death to learn her worth; but have, in some measure, given testimonies of love which have done much to brighten her declining years.

"Thus we are without a mother. What a change! Our earliest, oldest, unfailing friend has gone. She to whom we seemed to belong in a peculiar sense is gone; but gone full of years and honors, after a favored life, a venerable age, and a larger experience of happiness than falls to the lot of most human beings. I trust mother's death will not loosen our union. She was a centre to us. Let her memory be a bond. One of our consoling recollections is, that her peace was never disturbed for a moment by discord among her children."

Of his mother's life and character he gave this brief, but truthful sketch, in a letter to a friend.

"*June*, 1834.* I have just lost my mother. She had attained to the age of eighty-two, and the time had come for her to leave us; and yet I do not feel the loss the less on this account, for her faculties had almost wholly escaped the influence of time, and her affections were gaining strength to the last hour. She never enjoyed life more than in her age. Released from the cares of domestic life, she was allowed to give up herself to her friends, in the quiet of her apartment, and there her cheerful spirit, bright conversation, and strong interest in others drew round her a numerous circle, comprising many young, in whom she took great delight. She was the mother of ten children, of whom nine attained to adult years, and seven survived her. She was left a widow, in narrow circumstances, with six sons and three daughters, the oldest about nineteen. But her energy and sound judgment established over them a salutary control, and she lived to see them prosperous in the world beyond what is common in such large families, devoted to her happiness, tenderly alive to her worth, united together in uninterrupted concord, sincere believers in Christianity, and none, I trust, strangers to its power.

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* To Mrs. Joanna Baillie.

"At one period of her life, my mother's singular directness gave some appearance of hardness to her character, which time softened down. Her sensibility more and more broke through the restraints which her aversion to pretension had imposed; so that the winter of her age seemed warmed and brightened with the fervor of youthful feeling. I never witnessed in her such overflowings of gratitude to God and of social affection as in her last years. An improvement seemed going on in her character like that which death produced in her countenance, — for at the moment of death a beautiful serenity overspread her features, and her brow became almost as smooth as in youth.

"Such is the friend I have lost, — my earliest, oldest friend, — who alone of all human beings has sympathized with me through every stage of my life, and whose love seemed to connect my whole existence. Beautiful, sacred bond of parent and child! How true is it that the most precious gifts and beneficent ordinations of God are to be met with in our common paths! Under every roof are to be found these relations which are meant to be the springs of sublime virtue and the sincerest happiness."

By the death of his mother, Dr. Channing became the head of the family; and the dignity, tender affection, faithfulness, with which he fulfilled the duties of this position could not be surpassed. With thoughtful sympathy, he made the trials, joys, responsibilities, of his brethren and sisters, nephews and nieces, his own. His generosity to each and all was unlimited, and grew with their need of his aid, counsel, or countenance. His respect for the personal independence of others, dislike of any approach to flattering attentions, aversion to patronage, stern sincerity, threw sometimes a reserve over his manner, which restrained the free communications of those whom he most desired to attract. But nothing rejoiced him more than hearty trust in his affection. He longed to be loved again with the purity and truthfulness with which he himself loved, and was deeply pained when he failed to put others at their ease. Speaking of this trait, he says: —

"I expect my friends to confide in the constancy of my affection, as much as I do myself. I feel as if they must know what goes on in my heart, so distinct is my own consciousness of my strength of attachment. I forget that I am not very transparent, and cannot therefore be excused from outward signs of regard."

"My reserve has sometimes prevented me from doing justice to my own heart, and given me the appearance of coldness when I have been deeply touched by kindness. I recommend to you no forced expressions of feeling, but when the emotion comes to the lips, give it utterance."

"I cannot express to you the satisfaction I should find in the freest intercourse of mind with you. I wish it for both our sakes, and I cannot blame myself for not having established such an intercourse of thought and feeling. I do not mean by this that I blame you. There are often mysterious bars to the free communication of souls. I sometimes want power to open other minds to me when I am most desirous to do it."

A close observer has well described the cloud of abstraction in which Dr. Channing sometimes appeared to dwell apart from common interests, and by which even friends felt placed at a distance.

"Intimacy with him was a rare thing; and even where it existed, it was attended with restraints not usual in the closest friendship. Where there was perfect freedom of *mind* in intercourse with him, there was not the perfect freedom of manner that ordinarily follows it. It has been said of Washington, that none of his military companions could freely lay their hand upon his shoulder. The same was true of Channing. He was a person of a delicate frame, but of a great presence. . . . . .

"It is extremely difficult to be at once a man of deep, earnest, continued thought, and a man of society. When fixed attention to some theme has been channelling its way in the mind all the day long, it is not easy at evening to turn it into the varied flow of easy and perhaps sportive conversation, yielding itself to all the impulses of surrounding and miscellaneous society. The very fibres of the soul have been strained till they are stiffened. . . . . . Add to all this the effect of a certain factitious reverence in society for him who bears the clerical office; let it be such as to forbid, if I may say so, the free encounter of wits with the literary, professional, or intelligent men that surround him; let them choose to exclude him from their occasions of natural and unrestrained intercourse; and it will be strange, if he escape the influence of such a combination of causes. One may have a nature the most bland, gentle, and affectionate that ever existed, and yet it will not be strange, if, in such circumstances, he shuts himself up in his own thoughts, and, indeed, acquires a habit of pursuing out his own train of thoughts, so that he seems to be alone, even in society. I think, indeed, that this habit contributed, more than any thing else, to impart to Dr. Channing the air of isolation, and to those around him the feeling of constraint. He was always pursuing out his own thought; he seemed, without intending it, to *use* other men; every thing came into his crucible, and was melted and moulded into his form." *

But it was the predominance of the ethical element in Dr. Channing's nature, which chiefly explains the awe induced by his presence. Ever-wakeful conscience gazed down upon one through his whole expression, and there seemed no covert from the calm penetration of his eye. Pretension felt abashed, self-seeking humbled, before the ideal of goodness shining out from his spirit. In his look and air there was an intentness, an expectancy, a concentrated force, which, while they stimulated thought, checked desire of expression. His truthfulness made the interview solemn as a visit to the shrine of an oracle. And yet there was no appearance of severe inspection or stoical hardness. On the contrary, no trait was more remarkable than his delicate regard for individual privacy, his modest oversight of weaknesses, his deference even for the frivolous and young. Amidst keen self-reproach, one felt strengthened with new consciousness of moral life, new aspirations after integrity. It was plain that his reverence for the central power of good, in every spirit, was yet stronger than his quick sense of superficial attainments in character. How habitually self-distrustful he was in his relations to others will appear by a few extracts from his letters.

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* Dr. Dewey's Discourse on the Character and Writings of Channing, pp. 27, 28.

"Among my gifts, I never considered that of counsel as holding a high place; and I have come to think that duty is so far an individual thing, so dependent on the inward frame and on peculiarities which only he who has them knows, that I have less solicitude than ever to be an adviser."

"This is all very vague, and sometimes we injure a friend by giving him the idea of a danger without putting a finger on the precise fault. I suspect, however, that we cannot serve one another much beyond such general hints. A man may be set to work, turned upon himself, by such remarks; but, unless his own consciousness reveals his difficulty, he can hardly learn it from abroad."

"You know me to be above affectation, and to have sufficient self-reliance in certain cases. But I continually see people who, in the ordinary concerns of life, and very important ones, too, are wiser than I am; and I fear to do injury rather than good by interference."

His unaffected respect for others made Dr. Channing most unwilling to censure or to listen to words of condemnation. The levity with which character is discussed and private affairs are canvassed was shocking to his nice sense of honor. He was utterly intolerant of gossip and scandal, and ever prompt to defend an assailed reputation, or to explain unfavorable reports. To a friend he writes: —

"I would have speech free as the wind in regard to principles, institutions, great truths, abuses, oppressions; but in regard to individual acts and character, I feel more and more the duty of caution. I have *faith* in my fellow-creatures; but it is exercised in the recognition of a deep, imperishable goodness amidst many and sometimes great imperfections. I forgive every thing to the generous and disinterested. Still more, I admire and love, even where I see very partial developments of character, and sometimes unaccountable mixtures of evil with goodness. I believe in their future perfection. How I should rejoice to see it now!"

And again: —

"I was truly glad to learn from your postscript that the report I communicated to you has no foundation. The conduct which I reprobated seemed to me a refinement on intolerance, a step beyond the Inquisition; and I could not forget it, when I thought of the individual. It came so directly, that I was almost obliged to credit it. I have received a new lesson on the duty of doubting, where our neighbour's reputation is concerned. I have long shut my ears on the reports of partisans of all kinds. What an amount of falsehood is swallowed by those who are talking always of individuals! One of the great benefits of intellectual improvement is the power it gives of conversing on general subjects."

In further illustration of this trait, the Discourse from which free extracts have been already made may be again quoted.

"His was a goodness of heart the most gentle, tender, and considerate. I do not believe that one unkind action can be found in his life. I never heard him utter a harsh and hasty word concerning any human being. But here I must still discriminate. In some respects he was a severe judge of men. Calmly and considerately his opinion was expressed; but it was strong and clear, and doubtless unsparing. He seemed at times a rigorous censor. Especially towards sensual aberrations he was so, and had some right to be, since he showed no indulgence towards himself. But his rigor was always tempered with pity. Informed, on an occasion, of a person who had fallen in this respect, 'Yes,' he said, 'I know that he has dishonored himself,' with such a tone of rebuke and sorrow united as I can never forget. That was doubtless an awfully severe moral judgment which he once pronounced on the nature of retribution, but it was not harsh nor cruel. A representation of the pains to be inflicted by conscience in another life having been mentioned, as very impressive, 'Yes,' he said, 'and it is all true; but, after all, does not the heaviest retribution for sin lie in the sin itself, — lie in being a sinner, — lie in the darkness and moral annihilation which sin causes, although the offender be unconscious of it?' Terrible thought! but one breathing lenity and compassion, while, at the same time, none but a mind awfully impressed by the evil of sin could have suggested it. But so were all things tempered in him. He was doubtless, from the very elevation of his sentiments, a strict and fearful judge of the characters of men; but how candid, considerate, and forbearing he was, all who have conversed much with him must know."*

Dr. Channing judged himself, indeed, far more strictly than he did others, and demanded more of his own will. His magnanimity in acknowledging limitations and errors, accepting criticism, and leaving his reputation to the just care of his fellow-men, may be shown by the following extracts from his correspondence.

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* Dr. Dewey's Discourse on the Character and Writings of Channing.

"I have come to think but little about the judgments people form of me; for they can know but little of the actions on which they pass sentence. I expect frequent misrepresentation as a matter of course. I wish to be influenced by indirect rather than direct judgments about me. To explain myself. When I do right, all good minds virtually approve me, whether they know what I have done or not. Their love of virtue is a love of me, as far as I am virtuous. So when I do wrong, though wholly undetected, all good minds condemn me as truly as if they witnessed the particular deed. This is the only judgment to be hoped or feared, and this is infallible. I wish to take refuge from superficial censures in this. . . . . . As to your want of faith, is it of the same nature with mine? I have faith in great principles, and faith in their ultimate triumph; but I often want faith in the sympathy of individuals with whom I converse, and shrink from expressing the truth, lest it should meet no response. This I am trying to overcome."

"You have begun well to tell me of my errors. What you have begun half in sport I should be glad to have you carry on in earnest. I would know myself, if possible; for I think that I am prepared for the knowledge, by my strong confidence in the capacity of reformation which belongs to our nature, and which God is most ready to assist."

"I ask you to retaliate my severities by setting all my defects and sins before me. If I do not profit, I will promise to be grateful."

"I thank you for your remarks on my Lectures. You were right in thinking that I like the greatest freedom of criticism. My principal objection to criticism is, that it recalls my mind to what I have written. When a work of mine is fairly through the press, I wish to shake hands with it and say a last word of blessing, and to know it no more."

"I thank you for your remarks on my article. They were only too sparing. Do read the article when it comes out. You will find that in almost every instance I have followed your suggestions, and I feel my work to be improved. I need a counsellor. My mind is sometimes too fervent for accuracy or caution of expression, and, fallen as we are on evil times, every word needs to be weighed."

"I am unwilling to owe reputation to concealment of any kind. I have not shrunk from saying what I think true, for the sake of nursing my good name."

Playful irony was a means of reproof that Dr. Channing occasionally used with great effect in his immediate circle; but there was such a light of kindness in his eye and smile, and such a purity, innocence, and childlike sportiveness in his allusions, that the most sensitive could not feel pained. His silence, too, in the presence of unreasonable emotion, was more impressive than most earnest speech. Only on extreme occasions did he express indignation, and then it was tempered with pity. His habitual mildness was strikingly manifested once to a skeptic, who was reproaching Jesus Christ for his "angry denunciations." In answer, Dr. Channing opened the New Testament and read the passages referred to aloud. As soon as he had finished, his hearer said, — "O, if *that* was the tone in which he spoke, it alters the case!" He recognized that justice might be at once firm, and free from personal passion. This consistent gentleness of manner, however, was the result of self-command. By temperament he was ardent, even to impetuosity, and nothing in his character was more beautiful than the serene benignity with which he controlled his quick impulses.

Enlightened will, indeed, presided over all his native instincts. "I had naturally," he once said, "not a little physical fear, but I have outgrown it. A sudden emergency *might* prove me a coward; but give me time to survey the foe or danger, and I should not tremble." Probably he mistook sensibility and imagination for fear; but if so, he had certainly verified in experience his own words, — "I call that mind free, which, through confidence in God and in the power of virtue, has cast off all fear but that of wrong-doing, which no menace or peril can inthrall, which is calm in the midst of tumults, and possesses itself though all else be lost."* When the Hon. Josiah Quincy was delivering a centennial address upon the settlement of Boston, in the Old South church, the alarm was given that one of the galleries was falling beneath the pressure of the multitude. The consternation and uproar in the vast crowd were appalling. "Dr. Channing rose," said a friend who was near him, "looked around, saw the impossibility of escape, and then remained standing, 'calm and self-possessed,' without a change in his countenance or attitude, till the agitation had subsided." Very seldom, too, was he known to exhibit the usual signs of grief. In the midst of persons excited by a pathetic appeal, some one said to him, — "How can you be so unmoved?" "My tears," he answered, "do not lie so near my eyes."

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* Works, Vol. IV., p. 73.

Once, however, when a very dear sister-in-law was taken away, he went to visit his mother, and, kneeling down by the side of her chair, was for a time borne away by the flood of his sorrow. And on retiring from his mother's death-bed, he could only utter, while his eyes were suffused and his voice trembled, — "In such an hour may you have the consolation of knowing that you have been a good son." A friend, who carried him the dreadful news of Charles Follen's death, relates that an expression of agony convulsed his features; but instantly he covered his face with his hands, and then, looking up with a most radiant and triumphant smile, he said, — "It is all well." Thus, in most trying scenes, the spirit shone out unclouded.

Dr. Channing's perfect self-control was shown, also, in his forbearance under injuries. In relation to a slander that was once circulated about him, he thus wrote to a friend: —

"*Boston*, November 9, 1837. I like to know the evil that is said of me, because much of it may be traced to misapprehension of what really took place, and because sometimes part of it has a foundation in real defects of character, and may be used for self-knowledge and self-reform. . . . . . I shall not be angered. Disappointment with me in such cases is sorrowful, never angry, and the impression of wrong is soon effaced by the subjects of deep, absorbing interest which every day pour in on my mind. I have the placableness of a short memory, if not of a Christian spirit. This must not trouble ——, for it does not trouble me. I only ask for light to make my path plain. Happily, on this point I am sure of myself, which I cannot say of other defects. I make it my rule to spend my *whole income*, to lay up *nothing*. At the same time, I hold myself bound not to exceed my income, and it is possible that in my case, as in others, the self-denial and economy necessary to keep within this bound may pass with some for meanness. On this head I have no solicitude, because, from the nature of the case, I am sure, not only of my motives, but of my conduct. This may explain reports to my injury."

"*Boston*, November 26, 1837. As to the reports themselves, they do not disturb me. I have gone through the hardening process to which all public men are exposed in our country, and not in vain. I am accustomed to the free use which sects, parties, and individuals make of my name, and I hope that something higher than habit keeps me calm. I have, too, an excellent specific against injuries of this kind, namely, a short memory, aided by absorption in very interesting subjects. We visionaries, as we are called, have this privilege, from living in the air, that the harsh sounds from earth make only a slight impression on the ear. . . . . . I have no desire to know the particular reports, because they cannot help me to understand myself. Sometimes this common liar, rumor, does tell truths, and I hold myself bound to be instructed by an enemy. But in the present case I think I know myself. And here let me say that I have regretted sending you my last letter on one account. I spoke there of my rules or habits of expense. The love I have for you and —— makes me willing to speak to you of such personal affairs, but to the world, to my harsh judges, to evil reporters, I have no explanation to make. My reputation, if it is good for any thing, will take care of itself. I beg you, therefore, to say nothing of that part of my letter to any person. Be not anxious to vindicate me, except on the ground of your own observation. I can furnish you no weapons. I know how many evil rumors are spread about me; not that I have enemies, for I doubt whether one human being cherishes any malignity towards me; but my retired habits favor much misapprehension, and then my defects, with a little exaggeration, furnish good topics for the gossip of the day. These rumors I leave to themselves. I would not on any account undergo the labor of 'ferreting' them out. I only ask that my friends will do me justice. I am ashamed to talk so much of myself, and here let the subject drop."

Most strange, indeed, it was that any one could have ever suspected this generous, hospitable, open-handed man of illiberality in money matters. To his relatives, to the deserving and struggling, to the poor, to charitable enterprises, he gave without stint. In the minutest practical affairs, as in his highest professed principles, his life was love. Possibly an explanation of this gratuitous calumny may be found in domestic circumstances to which he once had occasion thus to refer : —

" *January*, 1842. I am unable to make the loan which you request. The little property which can be called strictly my own is loaned to relatives, and had I more, the same disposition would be made of it. The property which passes for mine, but which is my wife's, I regard and treat as hers. I never invest it, but leave it to the care of friends, as was the case before our marriage, and, indeed, her control and use of it are essentially the same as at that period. I could serve such a cause as yours only by a donation, or by loaning income. But, I am sorry to say, neither of these modes of assistance is in my power. Our rule is, to lay up nothing, to add nothing to our property, to expend our whole income, and to seek secure, not productive, investments of property. I make this communication for you, and you only, because I wish you to understand that it is no indifference to your cause which leads me to withhold the aid you ask.

It would rejoice me to assist you, — to give something more than good wishes to an experiment so interesting to a Christian."

From his position as the minister of a leading congregation and a distinguished man of letters, as well as from the social relations into which he was brought by birth and by marriage, Dr. Channing was connected with the highest class of Boston society ; and refinement of feeling, tastes, and habits made him value at their full worth all means of elegance. But, as has been fully shown, his whole thought and aim were to throw open and diffuse the privileges of cultivated life. He had an utter aversion to the exclusiveness and arrogance of fashion. A few passages from his correspondence will show his desire to lessen the distance between himself and his less favored brethren.

"*April*, 1835. I wish more and more a simple, unostentatious style of living. The inconsistency of our habits with Christianity strikes me more and more. They separate us from our fellow-creatures, instead of spreading our sympathy and keeping love in perpetual exercise. I wish to bear witness to the spirit of Christianity, and to urge on men the duty of living for their own and others' perfection as they have not done, and my own habits must not war with my teaching. My aim is to spend nothing on myself which health and usefulness do not require."

"*May*, 1835. I am pained by the narrow, exclusive spirit which prevails even in our republic. Whilst we value the society of the more cultivated, let us look on every human being as one of our family."

"*June* 22, 1835. So you are building a house. By what sympathy is it that we are both carrying on the same work at once? I hope, however, your practical wisdom has kept you from my error. My house threatens to swell beyond my means, so that I cannot think of it with a perfectly quiet conscience. This is the only point in which I am in danger of extravagance. I spend nothing on luxuries, amusements, shows. My food is the simplest; my clothes sometimes call for rebuke from affectionate friends, not for their want of neatness, but for their venerable age. But one indulgence I want, — a good house, open to the sun and air, with apartments large enough for breathing freely, and commanding something of earth and sky. A friend of mine repeated to me the saying of a child, — 'Mother, the country has more sky than the town.' Now I want sky, and my house, though in a city, gives me a fine sweep of prospect, and an air almost as free as the country.

"I do not, however, suffer even a house to be an essential. When I think of Him who had not where to lay his head, and of the millions of fellow-creatures living in outward and inward destitution, I feel doubts and misgivings in enjoying the many accommodations which respectability is thought to require. To a Christian, to one who hungers and thirsts after moral excellence, what perplexities and obstructions are offered by the present condition of society! How hard to realize our conception of disinterested virtue! How the fetters of custom, forged by a self-indulgent world, weigh on us, and inthrall the purer and more generous feelings! Were I entering on life, instead of approaching its end, with my present views and feelings, and with no ties, I should strive for a condition which, without severing me from society, would leave me more free to act from my own spirit, to follow faithfully and uncompromisingly the highest manifestations of virtue made to my mind. I mean not, however, to repine. I have not been wholly a slave to outward and inferior influences, and there is a world of true, perfect freedom."

"*October*, 1835. Had I more strength and wealth, I should devote myself to the improvement of the mass of the people, especially the laboring classes; but I cannot speak to them, and my means are scattered by so many claims, that I cannot sustain others to labor among them."

"*June*, 1837. I see no reason why a person should dress plainly because he is religious; but there is a reason why we all should. I cannot bear to see finery and rags near each other. If we would clothe the naked, instead of dressing extravagantly, how much better it would be! I desire to have the finest taste cultivated in all, to have the power of perceiving and enjoying beauty called out in all. But I cannot wear costly garments while I see such a man as Allston scarcely able to live. What a disgrace is it to Boston, that the greatest genius of this country in his department should be in want! Millions are spent in decoration every year, but nothing is given to him. I would have our private dwellings simple, but our public edifices magnificent models of taste, and ornaments to the city. I would have a public gallery freely open. We should not keep pictures at home, or more than one, perhaps, and the rest should be for the community. Expensive furniture is of the least possible value, because it is so artificial; and, in this country, it is a source of great trouble, from needing so much care to keep it in order. The way to be comfortable here is to live simply."

"*August*, 1837. I speak of my *faith* in the coming kingdom of heaven upon earth, and yet I feel its weakness. We all need to believe more profoundly in what may be accomplished now within us and around us by the helps of Christianity and of God's spirit. How prone we all are to make the world as it now exists the standard of our hopes, efforts, and lives!"

"*September* 25, 1838. I shall read your article on 'Domestic Service' with much interest. It is a subject which forces itself on me often. The true relation between families and their domestics is little understood. One would think that living under one roof would be a tie of some strength, and that people crossing each other's path every hour would come to sympathize in one another's weal and woe; but among us there is little fellow-feeling; not that there is unkindness or injustice, but much mutual indifference. I trust that we are in a better way, and that the complaints about domestics will wake up people to ask if the relation may not need some essential reform. In this country, the idea of *respectability* must be associated with domestic service, and nothing but ignorance on both sides prevents this."

"*September*, 1838. The intelligence of our people is what we must be judged by. The higher class here is continually 'invaded' and filled from below. Consequently, we cannot have the refinement, the grace, of the higher classes abroad. We have not their distinctive accomplishments, their conventional manners. But in reality we have more vigor of mind, a rough, healthy energy for common pursuits."

This desire of elevating all men to the privileges of the most refined each year colored more deeply the tone of thought, conversation, and preaching of Dr. Channing. He saw that political freedom and equality are of little value without social freedom and equality, and that these can be practically attained only by a reconstruction of social relations. These views led him to watch with deep anxiety the tendencies of his adopted city. He felt proud of her intelligence and philanthropy, and was inclined to think that no community in Christendom surpassed her in purity, justice, and efforts for general improvement. But he regarded with pain her rapidly increasing material prosperity, and still more the growing influence of wealth and fashion. The following passages will indicate his feelings in relation to Boston.

1835. "A census just taken in this city reports our number to be seventy-seven thousand, and yet the people are not satisfied. They want a new railroad to connect us with the Lakes and the West, which will double our population. What good is to come from this great accumulation of people I do not see. If we loved people more by having more swarming about us, I should not object; but I fear men grow cheaper, and are less cared for, in large cities than in small."

1836. "Our city is growing on every side, — I fear too fast. I would not have Boston another New York. I should enjoy a smaller place more. There would be more sympathy, mutual action, quiet, self-recollection. However, I can be at peace in a crowd."

"*May*, 1836. We are a city too much given to croaking. I have been told that we were on the brink of ruin ever since I knew the place. Those whose duty it is to carry forward society despair of it. They despair of the body of the people, despair of our institutions, despair of liberty through the world. Too many of our young men grow up in a school of despair. Instead of hearing a generous, kindling voice, summoning them to the service of their country and mankind, they hear the palsying tones of cold derision or desponding prophecy, and the effect on the young

I know to be mournful. Not long ago, I received a letter from a very intelligent European, asking me with much concern whether he could trust the report of a friend just returned from Boston, who had told him that we in this city had given up the cause of freedom in despair, and that we were prepared for monarchy. In reply, I gave him to understand that a stranger was apt to misinterpret our croaking, that our heart was sounder than our language, that a man who should take us at our word, and set up for king, would find a strange dearth of subjects; but still, that there was a skepticism which augured badly for the country. Much as I lament our want of tolerance, I lament our want of faith in human improvement much more. This hangs as a weight on our political and religious progress. What a new city this would become, if the enlightened and influential would enter with a trustful spirit on the work of forming a community worthy of freedom and fitted to sustain free institutions!

"You will not think that I undervalue the advantages or improvements of the city in which I live. Did I not love and honor it, I should say nothing of its defects. Believing, as I do, that it contains elements of improvement to be found, perhaps, in no other city on earth, I am anxious that the obstructions to their development should be removed. I would leave it for no spot under heaven. But may I not, therefore, see, and should I not speak of, its defects? Boston can afford to be spoken of truly and plainly. In thinking so, I pay it the best tribute of respect."

1837. "In spite of the deadening power of habit, in spite of the mighty worldly movement, the rush for gain, which seems to absorb all our energies, there is some higher life, some consciousness of the great defects of our social state and of individual virtue, some aspiration after something better. Winter has its signs of spring, swellings of leaf-buds on the naked branches. I live by faith and hope, and was never farther from despair.

"The passion for lectures continues, and these and other pleasures have shut up our theatres almost entirely. I hope the next triumphs of reason and civilization will be over great parties. Are we not cultivated enough for *society*? Now we congregate; but ought it to satisfy our ambition to take the first rank among gregarious animals? The sight of young girls, decked for balls, &c., brings this evil strongly before me. I respect people too much to make spectacles of them. I like good taste in dress, but I can hardly remember the time when the sight of people dressed richly and elaborately did not give me a feeling approaching contempt. This I suppose is idiosyncrasy."

"*January* 28, 1842. My confinement has robbed me of some pleasures which I prize not a little; I mean the concerts of Braham and other distinguished musicians. There seems to be a breaking out of a musical spirit among us, and to a people so inclined to the positive and precise, good must come from an infusion of this more ethereal influence. Last evening, however, I was able to attend a concert of Knoop. This was a real pleasure, though somewhat exhausting. I have lost a good deal of pleasure in life by neglecting music. Now that I am beginning to grow old, and my ears are losing their sensibility, I am waking up more to the mysteries of harmony. There is one discouraging thought, that, in countries where music is most cultivated, force and freedom of soul seem wanting, and men acquiesce in servitude. Perhaps I have been unjust to the people here in attributing to them so prosaic a character. They are certainly much absorbed in material interests, and much wedded to conventionalities; but, at the same time, they are an excitable race, full of life and sympathy, and are swept along by common impulses more often than most communities. At present, there are various excitements. Still, I wish that we could join a little more of childhood with our manly enterprise and calculation."

And now let us take a hasty view of a day of Boston life. The sun is just rising, and the fires are scarcely lighted, when, with rapid step, Dr. Channing enters his study. He has been wakeful during many hours, his brain teeming, and, under the excitement of his morning bath, he longs to use the earliest hours for work. His eye and smile are so bright, his step is so elastic, his whole air so buoyant, the spirit, in a word, seems so to shine through his slight frame, that a stranger would not anticipate the languor which a few hours of labor will bring. "Dr. Channing small and weak!" said a Kentuckian, who was a fervent admirer of his writings; "I thought he was six feet, at least, in height, with a fresh cheek, broad chest, voice like that of many waters, and strong-limbed as a giant." And now in these morning hours you see how radiant he is with energy. His first act is to write down the thoughts which have been given in his vigils; next, he reads a chapter or more in Griesbach's edition of the Greek Testament; and after a quick glance over the newspapers of the day, he takes his light repast. Morning prayers follow, and then he retires to his study-table. If he is reading, you will at once notice this peculiarity, that he studies pen in hand, and that his book is crowded with folded sheets of paper, which continually multiply, as trains of thought are suggested. These notes are rarely quotations, but chiefly questions and answers, qualifications, condensed statements, germs of interesting views; and when the volume is finished, they are carefully selected, arranged, and, under distinct heads, placed among other papers in a secretary. If he is writing, unless making preparation for the pulpit or for publication, the same process of accumulating notes is continued, which at the end of each day or week are also filed. And as your eye scans the interior of the secretary, you observe that it is already filled with heaps of similar notes, arranged in order, with titles over each compartment. These are the materials for the work on "Man." When a topic is to be treated at length in a sermon or essay, these notes are consulted, the reflections, conjectures, doubts, conclusions, of many years are reviewed, and then, with treasures of memory orderly arranged, Dr. Channing fuses and recasts his gathered ores under the warm impulse of the moment. He first draws up a skeleton of his subject, selecting with special care and making prominent the central principle that gives it unity, and from which branch forth correlative considerations. Until perfectly clear in his own mind as to the essential truth of this main view, he cannot proceed. Questions are raised, objections considered, explanations given, definitions stated, what is merely adventitious and accidental swept aside, the ground cleared, in a word, and the granite foundation laid bare for the corner-stone. And now the work goes rapidly forward. With flying pen he makes a rough draught of all that he intends to say, on sheets of paper folded lengthwise, leaving half of each page bare. He then reads over what he has written, and on the vacant half-page supplies defects, strikes out redundancies, indicates the needed qualifications, modifies expressions. Thus sure of his thought and aim, and conscientiously prepared, he abandons himself to the ardor of composition.

Dr. Channing, however, self-governed and methodical though he was, did not always find himself in a fit mood to write ; and then he forbore to force his mind to unwilling effort. He knew that fallow seasons must alternate with fruitfulness. He thus describes his own experience : —

"I have great faith in inspiration ; but it is a fruit and reward of faithful toil, not a chance influence entirely out of our power."

"There is often a mysteriousness in the combination of constitutional qualities. Some men with high intellectual endowments, and fine dispositions, too, live almost useless lives, in consequence of a diseased sensitiveness, over which the will has no power. Sometimes I have seen this disease mitigated, if not removed, by a change of circumstances, compelling the individual to exert and commit himself. In truth, what we call hard necessity is often our best friend. One thing I learn by growing experience, — how much more the happiness and usefulness of life depend on a right balance of mind than on remarkable gifts. I am less and less a worshipper of mere intellect."

"That we have succeeded is no pledge of future success. Perhaps I have singular consciousness of the variableness and instability of my intellectual energies ; but whilst it damps no effort, it keeps me from all hope which may be turned into mortification."

"I have spoken of my doubts as to my own mind. I do not mean that I see any instability in my intellectual *acquisitions ;* but that life and force of thought which give to writing all its efficiency, without which learning is dull, and truth falls dead from the lips or pen, this mysterious energy comes and goes, — by what laws I cannot tell. In truth, this sun-like brightness and warmth of conception, when it does come upon me, — and I should be ungrateful not to feel that it has sometimes visited me, — is welcomed as an inspiration from above. I hope it will not desert me; but I do not presume upon it."

From his habit of intense contemplation, and his faithful use of bright hours, came Dr. Channing's power of vivid conception. A few grand principles,* early received into his longing spirit, had assimilated and organized materials of growth from facts of his experience, until they appeared before him as palpable realities. His work was to spread their kingdom; and current events he used as occasions for establishing their sway. Thus he was always in earnest; his aim was clear, and he wasted no time in random efforts. Well-balanced vigor of intellect, the fruit of patient discipline, gave directness to his thoughts and effectiveness to his expression. He belonged, as has been justly said, to the "poetic order of philosophic minds." † Imagination, ideality, the perception of analogies, was probably his strongest natural faculty; but under the command of conscience, his powers of analysis and discrimination had been trained to minutest accuracy; and good-sense presided, like a judge, over every mental operation. Word-fencing in all its modes, cut-and-thrust disputation, tricks of debate, he detested; but logic in its highest form, of strong grasp of central principles, natural method, detailed application of laws, and exact statement, he possessed in a rare degree. The enthusiasm, which, under some conditions of life, would have embodied itself in poetry, made his composition a dynamic rather than a mechanical process. And his love of beauty gave a living warmth and grace to the simple style that clothed the symmetric structure of his argument.

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* These principles have been set forth by Dr. Channing in the Introduction to the complete American edition of his Works. We are not aware that this piece of autobiography, which the author valued highly, has been reprinted in England.

† Essay on the Philosophical Character of Channing, by Rowland G. Hazard.

When once he was done with a sermon or essay, Dr. Channing quickly forgot it. He had no eagerness to multiply hearers, to win notoriety, and to guard his writings from the attacks of foes or the plagiarism of friends. He claimed no exclusive ownership in the common elements of God's truth and love ; and, humbly thankful for what he had received and had been the medium of diffusing, he forgot the things behind and pressed on. In a letter to Dr. Tuckerman, he says : —

> "I feel an almost insuperable reluctance to look back, and read over and put in order what I have written. I have something of the nature of the inferior animals in regard to my literary offspring. When once they have taken flight, I cast them off, and have no desire of further acquaintance. I have postponed this work, on account of its unpleasantness, being unwilling to cloud my summer with it."

By noon Dr. Channing's power of study and writing is spent, and he seeks the fresh air. In company with his friend Mr. Phillips, he walks in the sunny streets around the Common, discussing high themes of religion and humanity, or attends to business arrangements, in conducting which he shows the same quick comprehension and sound judgment which characterize him in moral and spiritual relations, or goes to the Athenæum to look over the files of foreign papers and new journals, or makes calls upon parishioners and acquaintances, or visits some of the poor and desolate families whose names are on his lists. After dinner, he lies for a time upon the sofa, and walks again or drives into the country. Sunset in the city, as at Newport, he keeps as a holy hour, looking from upper windows, which command wide prospects, over the broad basin of Charles river and the undulating range of Brighton and Milton hills. During the winter twilight he likes to be silent and alone.

After tea, he usually listens for an hour or more to reading from some of his young relatives or female friends, interspersing illustrative remarks, and leading off conversation upon interesting points. Then guests come in, strangers to be introduced, earnest reformers seeking his sympathy or advice, familiar acquaintances with interesting topics of the day, or members of the family who have been to hear Dr. James Walker's profound discourses on philosophy, or Ralph Waldo Emerson's brilliant lectures, where ancient wisdom smiles with new-born beauty. On the rich themes thus presented he discourses with full, soaring thought that lifts the hearer to unwonted heights, and yet with unaffected deference to the most careless word of the youngest in the circle. On other occasions, a party of select friends gather in his rooms by invitation, for the purpose of unfolding some great subject of speculative or practical interest, not in the way of discussion so much as of colloquy. A listener will be much impressed at such times with one trait, which at first seems inexplicable in so earnest a person as Dr. Channing. For the most part, he leaves to others all eloquent outpourings of faith on the great principles involved, and limits himself to the much humbler path of suggesting doubts, marking limits, putting difficult questions, arraying objections in fullest force, and pruning luxuriant raptures with keen criticism and unsparing qualification. The sincerity with which this is done seems sometimes to make light of etiquette, and even of individual feelings. But on closer observation, one is touched with reverence to see that this unattractive attitude of mind is the result of intense love of truth, justice, personal unconsciousness, and a respect for other minds too genuine to mock them with a flattering show of honor. Other parties he delights to collect to listen to readings from Shakspeare, or to recitations by Mr. William Russell. This is a pleasure which he greatly enjoys. "I have always been inclined," he says in a letter, "to love people for their voices. A musical voice wins its way to my heart; and when it communicates to me the grand and beautiful thoughts of a work of genius, it is particularly captivating." On yet other evenings, he meets a few gentlemen to consider gravely and profoundly, with a view to practical measures, the wants and tendencies of the times. It falls to him, generally, to propose and open the subject; and the breadth of view, the justice at once to conservatism and radicalism, the reverence for the old blended with hope for a higher good, the fidelity to his own convictions, yet hearty candor to opponents, with which this is done, show how habitual is his feeling, that only from the combination of many minds pervaded by love of truth can there be an approximation to infallibility. Yet "always he seemed to have a thought beyond every body's thought that he conversed with." In the following remarks on another he drew his own portrait, as he appeared in such assemblies. "It was a great struggle to him to oppose others, and yet he never shrunk from what he thought right. Some men have the organ of combativeness, and seem to take pleasure in conflict. They are hard and rough, and suffer nothing in wounding others. The firmness of such persons I value very little. It is often a vice. The combination of energy with sweetness is the perfection we must strive for." Once in a winter, or possibly oftener, his evening hearth was brightened by the presence of Washington Allston. He loved this friend for his lofty purity of character, as much as he admired his grand genius ; and the courtesy with which each recognized the other's greatness was most noble. Mr. Allston was prompt to seek his friend's judgment of a new picture, so much did he confide in his simple instincts of beauty and truthfulness of taste. And by the hour would Dr. Channing listen, rapt and silent, with childlike animation on his spiritual countenance, whilst the painter poured forth his golden floods of high idealism, devout sentiment, criticism, anecdote, description. He joyfully made the sacrifice of wasted days following such wakefulness, for the artist's best hour for talk was midnight.

During the last years of his life, Dr. Channing's desire rapidly enlarged of forming wider acquaintance with his fellow-men, and he was led to visit other cities, and to travel. In New York and Philadelphia he formed most interesting and improving friendships, and was profoundly moved by the affectionate regard with which he was there, as everywhere, greeted. Absorbed in the pursuit of sublime ends, retiring in his habits, naturally "diffident," as he described himself, "to the verge of shyness," and rather pained than gratified by being made an object of notice, it very slowly broke upon his apprehension, that a combination of character and events had made him a power among men. Private manifestations of sympathy touched him most deeply. After speaking to a friend of the humbling sense of defects called out by what seemed to him undue public admiration, he continues: — "It is on other occasions, that I feel that my powers have been used for a good end. It is when a nursery-man forgets his plants and customers to express his interest in my views, and a retired Quaker family is moved by my presence, that I become conscious that I have found my way to the hearts of my fellow-creatures. This is better than fame, a thousand times."

From many records of excursions, which illustrate his delight in scenes of natural beauty, the following may be selected as very characteristic, while interesting also from its associations.

"NIAGARA FALLS.

"I arrived last evening at this spot, — the great object of my journey, as far as any thing but health could be called an object, — and was repaid almost by one view for all fatigues. I find that I knew nothing of this wonderful place. I will not say that the *half* had not been told me; for I feel as if *nothing* had been told. People have talked and written about it, but one is tempted to think that they did not understand what they had seen, until he recollects that a man must speak of Niagara in its own tones, or his voice will be but a faint echo, giving no conception of the original. Niagara must tell you its own story, or you will never hear it.

"The pictures I had seen of this place, and the fact that some persons had been disappointed by the first view, rather prepared me to meet this wonder of the world with emotions not very different from what had been excited before. But the first view taught me that I was coming under a new spell, and was to be swayed and lifted up by a mightier energy than I had ever met. The first view scattered all my doubts and misgivings. A new voice, waking the whole soul, came to me from the cataract. It was about sunset, at the close of a long day's ride, when I was so wearied that I had made up my mind not to look at the falls until the morning, lest I should not greet them with due admiration. It was at this moment that I caught a glimpse of them from the carriage. Instantly I felt that it was not necessary to dress up my mind for an introduction to the scene. We were friends in a moment. I was not awe-struck, as by the presence of a mighty stranger. Here was a more glorious revelation, a concentration, if I may so speak, of that power which had been for years my daily joy, as manifested in heaven and earth, and my soul exulted, burst forth to meet it, to mingle with and partake it.

"I know not how far I am peculiar; but such scenes have almost an exhilarating influence. The sublimity around me seems to call forth something congenial within. Instead of shrinking before the majesty of nature, my mind rather dilates into a proportionate elevation. Instead of fear, I become a hero. I am driven to the edge of precipices. I want to draw as near as may be to the thunder and rush of the torrent. Perhaps the awful power manifested in such scenes is less terrific on account of the strong impressions I receive of the *beauty* with which it is strangely blended. This beauty is more striking on account of its union with the grand. I am almost tempted to say, that Niagara is as beautiful as it is sublime. I wish I had time to speak of this feature. I agree with Miss Sedgwick, that 'justice has never been done to its beauty.' I have always been alive to the beauty of waterfalls. When I visited Terni or Velino, — one of the most exquisite spots, — I was almost indignant at Byron, who talked of the 'hell of waters.' You must come here, dear ——. A visit to this spot is an era in one's life. I feel as if I were richer for life. The universe has become nobler in my eyes. I know more of its Author."

The last spring of Dr. Channing's life was passed in travelling with his family through the interior of Pennsylvania, along the romantic valleys of the Juniata and Susquehanna. Of this journey he thus speaks: —

"*July* 14, 1842.* I have been prevented from writing in part by another illness, brought on me by my rashness. I have long had an earnest desire to visit the interior of Pennsylvania, especially the river Juniata and the valley of Wyoming. I forget whether your journey carried you among this glorious scenery. If so, you will understand how much I enjoyed. But fearing the heat, I started too early, and the state of the roads led me to try the canal-boats by night, — the very peril I had determined to avoid, — and the result was, that I reached the valley of Wyoming only to be a prisoner nearly a month in an inn at Wilkesbarre, the principal town in that region. As soon as I could leave my bed, and bear the light, I found a compensation for my confinement in sitting at my window, which overlooked the Susquehanna, and receiving the soothing influences of this tranquil valley.† . . . . .

"To me, the burden of life — never overpowering — has been unspeakably lightened by my intercourse with Nature.

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* To Miss Harriet Martineau.

† Dr. Channing felt that he owed his restoration from this illness very much to the faithful care and most kind and disinterested attention of Dr. Miner of Wilkesbarre.

Nature has been, and is, my true, dear friend. She is more than a pleasure, even a deep, substantial, elevating joy. I feel as a stranger in new cities, and often in well-known circles; but I am at home amidst streams, mountains, valleys, which I have never known before. Nature does not alienate me from society, but reconciles me to it. In her order and beauty I see types and promises of a higher social state. I am sure that God will call forth a yet nobler beauty from the soul. Indeed, he is constantly doing so. There are human beings, human countenances, which speak to us as Nature never did. I earnestly desire to open this fountain of happiness to the mass of men. I am now in the country, surrounded by grand and interesting scenery; but how few who live in the midst of it have an eye and heart open to the wonderful spectacle!

"I live in the faith that the slumbering faculties of the multitude are to be awakened, that the rich provision God has made for all shall not always be the monopoly of the few. You speak of popular music springing up in your country. I rejoice to hear it, for England is any thing but musical. I want the common people to be refined as well as instructed, and believe that music will do them more good than much of the arid, dead knowledge now communicated to them. Have I told you what pleasure I have felt from the expressions of gratitude which I have received from mechanics in your country, for my efforts to elevate the laboring classes? I find my books circulate among them freely, and awaken some enthusiasm. *To me* this is *fame.* I wish my example might teach enlightened men to approach these classes with manly thoughts and with confidence in their capacity of appreciating truths of a generous character. Enlightened men leave the multitude to the bigot and the narrow priest. How wonderful that *Christianity* should be used to depress the poor! You have done your part. May you live to do more!

"In my late journey, I read your last two stories, — The Norwegian Tale and The Crofton Boys, — and was delighted with these most true, living pictures. They have found great favor here. I have read, too, your brother's paper on the Five Points of Calvinism; and perhaps nothing from his pen has interested and helped me more. I put it into ——'s hands, who entered fully into my enjoyment of it. I am just reading Dr. Follen's sermons. How rich in great thoughts! They are not as popular in form as I expected, but will do much good."

In the summer, Dr. Channing went to reside at Lenox, Massachusetts, amid the circle of warm-hearted and cultivated friends whose graceful and cordial hospitality crowns with the charm of moral beauty the picturesque scenery of Berkshire. From the interesting journal of Mrs. Charles Sedgwick, the following extracts are selected as fitly confirming the view which has been presented of his social character and the sphere of his influence.

"The greatest pleasure and excitement of the summer have consisted in Dr. Channing's residence among us. He came the first of July and remained nearly two months with us, besides making a little excursion to Bashpish, and spending a week at Stockbridge, so that he did not fairly get away till early in September. I had no personal knowledge of him before, having seen him but twice, and then merely for a few moments. I knew him only through his works; and the opportunity of intercourse with him, which I have been permitted to enjoy, I rank among the greatest pleasures and highest privileges of my existence. His life, from the state of his health, and probably, too, from the natural bent of his mind, was so entirely one of study and contemplation, that few who had lived all their days in the same city either knew him or thought of him in a social capacity. But singularly lofty as is the spirit which his writings breathe, he was true to every word of them in heart and life.

"It might have been truly said, after every fresh interview, — 'Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us?' His conversation was of a most elevating, inspiring nature, and there was something in his whole air and manner, in the expression of his eye and the tone of his voice, that gave me the impression of a being who lived altogether 'above the world'; and yet he was so full of human sympathy, of true brotherly love, so very kindly, that this elevation never constituted any barrier between himself and those with whom he associated; on the contrary, for the time being, they felt themselves lifted into a higher, purer, holier atmosphere than that of ordinary life. As I said lately, in a letter to a friend, the man was never lost in the saint, nor the friend in the prophet and seer. Indeed, we never had a friend in close neighbourhood, who showed more interest in every thing connected with us, in young and old, in our family and in our school, in our occupations, pleasures, and pursuits of every sort. I imagine he had never before lived where, from the absence of all conventionalisms, he was able to mingle so freely with those about him, and to penetrate so completely into the heart and core of things connected with their social condition. Our hours were never too late, or our assemblies of people too large, to tax his feeble strength, which, in such a place as Boston, unfitted him completely for general society; and our opportunities of free, informal, and kindly intercourse with him brought us so near to him, and on such a footing, that heart answered to heart as face to face. He took great interest in the children, and never suffered them to pass him without a kiss or kindly greeting. . . . . .

"Dr. Channing's countenance, when speaking in public or private, but more especially on religious subjects, was full of inspiration. His look, his manner, the tone of his voice, as well as what he uttered, were all calculated to make our hearts glow. His prayers were like the genuine outpourings of a tender, devoted, loving child, full of reverence and of earnestness, to his father. The whole effect of his services, even when conducted in this simple manner in a private room, was precisely such as I have since heard ascribed to his public services. The very atmosphere about him seemed holy. Our hearts — for the time, at least — were purified and exalted, and we shrank from dispersing, as if by leaving the spot we should break some sacred spell. . . . . .

"The First of August was exceedingly fine, — the air pure and clear. Almost every one looked eager and animated. I shall never forget Dr. Channing's appearance in the pulpit that day. His countenance was full of spiritual beauty, and when he uttered that beautiful invocation towards the close of his address, — which would not have been more characteristic or fitting, had he known that he should never speak again in public, — he looked like one inspired. I have more than once seen this part of his address referred to, and compared to the death-song of the swan.

"There were two hymns sung that day, written by my sister, Mrs. Susan Sedgwick, and myself. We had some amusement in their preparation. The Doctor had expressed a great wish that there should be lines written for the occasion, and Susan was applied to in his behalf. She sent him a hymn, which, not answering his purpose exactly, he returned, expressing a wish that she would write another, and embody certain sentiments which he specified. She called the first, laughingly, 'her rejected address'; and immediately complied with his request. Meanwhile I had submitted to him the rough draft of mine, which he criticized, suggesting amendments and alterations. I revised and corrected it, accordingly; and he said, jokingly, that we were the most docile authoresses he had ever known. . . . . .

"Dr. Channing was so exhausted by this effort of speaking, that he did not recover sufficiently to give us any of his society for several days. My mother, who had been spending some weeks here, was about leaving me; and he wished so much to entertain her at his room, that she was invited to take tea there, the day after the address was delivered. He sat in a corner of the sofa, hardly able to speak at all, but pleased to listen. . . . . .

"One day this summer, while he was sitting in my sister Catherine's parlour, something was said as to which period of life is the happiest. He smiled, and answered, that *he* thought it was about sixty."

How truly this sixty-third summer was his happiest will appear by giving a few extracts from his letters.

"*Lenox*, July 1, 1842. I expect a pleasant summer in this beautiful spot. I have just been walking on the piazza to make acquaintance with my new home, and struck up a friendship with it in a moment. It is a true delight to me to be once more in the midst of trees, fields, and mountains. I took a few drives in Wilkesbarre before leaving it, and caught some glimpses of that famed valley, and feel as if I were not wholly without recompense for what I suffered there. . . . . . I was less ill than at Newport last autumn. . . . . . For a fortnight I spent the day in or on the bed, in much passiveness of mind as well as of body, but with no weariness, no pain, no anxiety. That I should have risen so soon surprises me, and shows that the attack was less severe than it seemed at first. . . . . . I feel the unspeakable benefits of having modes of action over which place and time and weather have little influence. In my pen, paper, and a few books, I have all the apparatus I need for the great objects of life. This is the happiness of every man who has proposed the discovery and diffusion of great truths as his end, and in a better age this happiness will be a general possession."

" *Lenox*, July 21, 1842.* I am sorry to learn from your letter that your solicitude about me has continued so long. Ever since I began to improve in health, I have gone on very slowly, to be sure, but steadily, until now I am in my usual condition. Perhaps I insensibly let down my standard of health, and after every convalescence am satisfied with a little less vigor than I had before. But 'I have all things and abound.' It is not necessary to me 'to *learn* to be content.' I have been imbued with that lesson without effort. Life presents to me, as yet, her more cheering aspects. Is it that my condition has been happier, or my temperament happier, or that I have *resisted* evil less than most people? I have not gone through life fighting with my lot. When evil has come, I have accepted it at once. This looks like insensibility, and yet I am not stone.

" What mysteries we are to ourselves! Here am I finding life a sweeter cup as I approach what are called its dregs, looking round on this fair, glorious creation with a serener love, and finding more to hope for in society at the very time that its evils weigh more on my mind. Undoubtedly the independent happiness which I find in thought and study has much to do with my freedom from the common depression. The man who lives in a world of his own, and who has contrived to make or find a bright one, has struck one mine at least. But enough. This page of egotism is not to my taste, and, what is more, I have not gone to the root of the matter, but have touched only on superficial influences."

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* To Mrs. E. L. Follen.

" *July* 22. Grand mountain sweeps, precipices, sweet valleys, these absorb us. We do not look beneath the surface, and by a perverseness, very strange to the utilitarian, we sometimes gaze with most interest on spots which promise nothing to the farmer or mineralogist. The universe, as we plainly see, is adapted with the most provident wisdom to the wants and powers of man; and why may we not suppose that the want of the picturesque, the capacity of enjoying the wild and awful, may be provided for as truly as our physical needs, so that a spot quite barren to the owner or the geologist has a noble use in the system?

" We enjoy our life here greatly. The country is inexhaustible in pleasant excursions. After spending so many years on the sea-shore, I am the more alive to mountain scenery. But you must not think that I am living on fine sights. We write about what we call our pleasures, and are silent about our labors. The last week I returned to my writing, and when I can write I call myself well. I find that I have not forgotten the use of the pen, and hope to do a little good before I take leave of this pleasant earth. We have found the climate hot; in other words, we have found genuine summer here. In Rhode Island summer looks out now and then, but does not show her full, glowing face."

" *August* 7. In truth, our cup of outward good seems overflowing, and I receive it thankfully, not forgetting how soon it may pass from us. I can enjoy life with a full conviction of its transitoriness. I enter at once into the spirit of mountain scenery, and have even begun to make comparisons between mountains and the ocean. I can better judge after a longer acquaintance with the former. The ocean I have known from birth, and loved more and more."

" It encourages me to see the spirit of inquiry spreading through the country. In truth, every visit to the interior gives me signs of an improving people. I am struck with the effect of agriculture in softening the face of our hard New England. Time wears out the wrinkles on Mother Earth's brow. The world grows younger with age."

"*August* 11. The best gifts of Providence are universal, and the effect of *labor* in giving content and keeping off fits of depression is a striking proof of this encouraging truth. How far you were serious in your speculations about the connection between the geology of a country and the physical and moral qualities of the inhabitants I do not know; but there are some great facts in favor of the doctrine, and I see not why it may not hold good more extensively than we have supposed. I have lately asked myself whether light may not be a more important physical agent than it has been considered, — whether the various rays may not prevail in different proportions at different times, and whether the preponderance of one ray — say the red or violet — may not exert unsuspected influence on vegetable and animal nature. I feel that we know as yet little, or next to nothing, of the subtile power of nature."

"Our natural affections become more and more beautiful to me. I sometimes feel as if I had known nothing of human life until lately, — but so it will be for ever. We shall wake up to the wonderful and beautiful in what we have seen with undiscerning eyes, and find a new creation without moving a step from our old haunts."

"I mix freely with conservatives and with the hopeful, and am more and more inclined to extend my intercourse with men. Everywhere our common nature comes out. I have kept up by books an acquaintance with all classes; but real life is the best book. At the end of life I see that I have lived too much by myself. I wish you more courage, cordiality, and real union with your race. . . . . .

"Mr. —— spent part of the evening with us. He is a wise, just, noble man, and disposed to look with severe eyes on the corruption of the times; but, after a few gentle croaks, we agreed that the republic need not be despaired of. . . . . .

"Such is our asceticism. I should incline much, if I were in better health, to break every chain, and harden myself for a life of wider experience and more earnest struggle."

"*August* 11. Amidst so many social claims, and in this beautiful country, which seems inexhaustible in its attraction, I am not a hard student, and I feel more and more that love is better than thought, or rather, that thought is worth little when not steeped in love. My reserve is not to be broken down in these latter years of my life, but I think the ice melts. I am sure age need not be cold and unlovely, and I welcome any degree of improvement."

Thus serenely, amid beauty and love, glided by the last few months of earthly life. The clouds were lifted, and rainbows spanned them. His sun brightened to its setting. What he had sown in his spring-time with tears, he had reaped with joy in his autumn. And winds of Providence were scattering far his winged words. During the previous season he had written: —

"This morning I plucked a globe of the dandelion, — the seed-vessel, — and was struck as never before with the silent, gentle manner in which Nature sows her seed, and I asked if this is not the way in which the spiritual seed, *truth*, is to be sown. I saw, too, how Nature sows her seed broadcast; how the gossamer wing of the dandelion-seed scatters it far and wide; how it falls, as by accident, and sends up the plant where no one suspects. So we must send truth abroad, not forcing it on here and there a mind, not watching its progress anxiously, but trusting that it will light on a kindly soil and yield its fruit. So Nature teaches."

And now his own prophetic words were to be verified.

" Amidst such truly Elysian beauty, the chains which the spirit wears are broken, and it goes forth to blend with and to enjoy the universe. How ungrateful appear all selfish states of feeling, when in these blessed hours of liberty we diffuse ourselves through the glorious creation, sympathize with its order and happiness, and rise with joyful trust to its Divine Author! Is there not a day of release at hand? and may we not use such privileged seasons as foretastes of the joy which awaits us, if we bear patiently and do cheerfully the will of the Great Disposer?"

Early in September, Dr. Channing left Lenox, with the intention of returning to Boston through the romantic passes of the Green Mountains, but was detained at Bennington by an attack of fever, which, slight at first, steadily increased, until the appearance of typhoid symptoms induced his physicians to summon his brother from Boston. His immediate family and several near relatives were gathered around him by this alarming intelligence, and every effort was used to stay the insidious disease. But in vain. Through twenty-six days he slowly sank, though illusive changes excited hopes. From a desire to avoid occasions of excitement, the friends who watched by his bedside abstained from continued conversations; and his own consciousness of the intense action of his brain, and his wish to use every means of recovery, made him seek the most soothing influences. "Can you aid me to call off my mind," he several times said, "to common things, from these crowds of images, these visions of immensity, and rushing thoughts ?" A few extracts from the journal of one of the small band whose sad privilege it was to minister to him will show how characteristic, to the last, was each word and act.

"On my return from church, he expressed pleasure that I had been there, inquired earnestly as to the appearance of interest in the congregation, and talked with animation of missionary enterprises as signs of the deepening feeling of human brotherhood. 'Is there any influence in the world,' he said, looking up in my face with kindling expression, 'like the Christian religion, any power which so *insures* the progress of mankind and the widest diffusion of good ?' . . . . .

"As these plans for carrying out his cherished convictions were described, he at once, with his usual discrimination, stated the dangers and difficulties in the way, ending with these words : — 'I feel more deeply every day the close personal relations which the Heavenly Father sustains to every spirit, and the strong bond of a common spiritual nature between all human beings. But we must beware of over-excited feeling, of vague sentiment, of mingling our theoretical views or our favorite imaginations with the truth. We need to feel the *reality*,' — with great emphasis and expressiveness, — 'the REALITY of a spiritual life. In the common affections, in the usual relations, in seeming trifles, in the contingencies and events of hourly existence, we must learn to see a present Providence, an all-inspiring Goodness.' Finding himself much moved, he waved his hand, saying, — 'But I have talked enough.'

"He liked to hear the minutest details about friends, asked constantly after his relatives and acquaintances, and was much pleased with sketches of character. I told him of the ——s, of their beautiful home affections, their Quaker-like simplicity of life, their sacrifices for Antislavery, the blended courage and peace with which they had met their trials. A beautiful smile spread over his face as he listened, — his eyes full on mine. '*Do* such people grow among us?' he exclaimed, when I had finished. 'This is indeed refreshing. Tell me! have you met many such spirits?' On answering, 'They are not a few,' he replied, 'The earth, then, is very rich!' On describing another lovely family, he remarked, — 'Yes! such life is very beautiful. But they do not seem to have a readiness to sacrifice all for great ends and the good of man, like the ——s.' I told him of ——, who left a good situation with ample support, because he would not, even by *silence*, seem to compromise the truth, and who, sick and weak, far advanced in life, separated by poverty from his children, and even for a time from his wife whom he most tenderly loved, yet struggled on patiently, cheerfully, till he had paid debts incurred by failure years before, although he had received the benefit of the English bankrupt act. He looked up with the words, 'This is a hero, a *Christian hero*.' Again, I told him of ——, who, dying the horrible death of cancer in the face, though naturally a stern man, grew gentler, more thoughtful, prayerful, bright, and loving, each day. 'Ah!' said he, 'this shows us a little of the meaning of sorrow and pain. How grand is the power of the spirit!' When reading to him, he would say, — 'You may pass that; let me hear of men, of people, of their social relations.' . . . . .

"The courtesy with which he every morning greeted the young woman who arranged his room, and his kind inquiries after all members of the household, was unvarying. As the physician left him one morning, he remarked, — 'A good face that, and a most kind man!' He spoke with commendation of the great quiet of the hotel, and of the readiness to oblige exhibited by Mr. Hicks's family. He seemed deeply moved by the considerate stillness of the officers and soldiers of a military company which had held a review on the green before the house, and dined in a neighbouring room. To his attendants and watchers his thoughtful gratitude was incessant. Whenever we smoothed his bed or pillows, he would say, — 'You are really most admirable bed-makers. All is as well as could possibly be desired.' His chief anxiety seemed to be lest we should be strained by lifting him, wearied with watching, or injured by confinement; and he constantly urged us to seek recreation, and to take the fresh air. His apparent indifference to outward conditions was most characteristic. Whenever we attempted to make him easier, he would say, — 'O, it is of no importance, — of the least possible moment! Thank you.'

"I observed continually, that his mind seemed to be very active in sleep. Words escaped from his lips, though they were seldom distinct. But in every instance where their meaning was caught, he appeared to be engaged in acts of prayer. 'Heavenly Father' was most often intelligible. His very earnestness sometimes wakened him. Once, on thus rousing, he said, — 'I have had a singularly vivid dream of being engaged in prayer for ——, by which he seemed to be very deeply affected.' And after a short slumber at the close of a restless night, his first words were, — 'I have had a most genial nap, and I do not know that my heart was ever so overflowed by a grateful sense of the goodness of God.' It was most characteristic, that a man, who through life had such an aversion to any thing like parade of religious feeling, should thus unconsciously exhibit his all-pervading piety. Thursday night he passed in a wholly wakeful state. In the morning he told me that his mind had been very active, that he had allowed it to work freely, and had enjoyed greatly his thoughts. . . . . .

"On Friday, September 30, he said to Dr. Swift, — 'I think myself less well. Week has passed after week, and, instead of improving, I seem to myself declining. I should wish, if it is the will of Providence, to be able to return home,' — adding, after a moment, — '*to die there.*' His voice was even and firm, as he spoke, and the habitual tranquillity of his manner undisturbed. He instantly added, — 'But it will all be well; it *is* all well.' This was the only time that he distinctly referred to his death; though he undoubtedly felt that his recovery was hopeless, he was probably unprepared, as we all were, for the very rapid change. During this day he visibly sank, and could only with the greatest exertion move at all. The effort to take nourishment distressed him. Yet, when requested to receive something, he would whisper, — 'O, yes! I will take it. I desire to be true to all the relations of duty.' Once, however, he replied, with a word of endearment, — 'I wish now to remain for a *long time* without taking any thing. I wish to be *quiet*.' . . . . .

"On Sunday, October 2d, as he heard the bells ring, he said to us, 'Now go to church.' 'It is a part of true religion, dear Sir, to nurse the sick and aid our friends.' 'True,' he replied; 'you may stay.' He asked us to read to him from the New Testament. 'From what part?' 'From the Sermon on the Mount.' As we closed the Lord's Prayer, he looked up, with a most expressive smile, and said, 'That will do now; I find that I am too much fatigued to hear more. I take comfort, *O, the greatest comfort*, from these words. They are full of the divinest spirit of our religion.' *

"In the afternoon he spoke very earnestly, but in a hollow whisper. I bent forward; but the only words I could distinctly hear were, 'I have received many messages from the spirit.'

"As the day declined, his countenance fell, and he grew fainter and fainter. With our aid, he turned himself towards the window, which looked over valleys and wooded summits to the east. We drew back the curtains, and the light fell upon his face. The sun had just set, and the clouds and sky were bright with gold and crimson. He breathed more and more gently, and, without a struggle or a sigh, the body fell asleep. We knew not when the spirit passed.

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* See Note B, at the end of the volume.

"Amidst the glory of autumn, at an hour hallowed by his devout associations, on the day consecrated to the memory of the risen Christ, and looking eastward, as if in the setting sun's reflected light he saw promises of a brighter morning, he was taken home."

The body was immediately conveyed by the family to Boston, — the Western Railroad Company, through Josiah Quincy, Jr., Esq., with most delicate and thoughtful kindness, offering them the free use of a car.

On the afternoon of Friday, October 7th, the funeral services were observed at the Federal Street meeting-house, in compliance with the wish of the Society, as thus expressed: —

"*At a meeting of the Proprietors of the Meeting-house in Federal Street, in the city of Boston, the following Resolutions were offered by Hon.* JUDGE DAVIS, *and unanimously adopted.*

"*Resolved*, That we have heard with profound grief the intelligence of the death of our revered and beloved pastor and friend, the Rev. WILLIAM E. CHANNING, D. D., with whom we have been so long and so happily connected, and whose invaluable moral and religious teachings we have so long enjoyed.

"*Resolved*, That we dwell with deep sensibility upon the life and services of this faithful servant of God, now brought to a close on earth; upon the energy, unbroken to the last, with which, notwithstanding much physical infirmity, he labored in the discharge of the trust assigned to him by his great Taskmaster in Heaven; upon his loyalty to duty, his sympathy with humanity, his religious faith, the eminent Christian graces which adorned his character, and the persuasive power with which he preached the gospel of Christ: and we feel a profound sense of gratitude for the peculiar privileges which we have so long had, in hearing his voice, receiving his instructions, and in being guided, warmed, and animated by his discourses and his life.

"*Resolved*, That, as members of this community, we mourn the vanishing from earth of a great moral and intellectual light, in the death of one who has uniformly devoted great powers to good ends, whose bosom glowed with love for the whole human family, who has been the eloquent and fearless advocate of truth, liberty, and humanity, whose admirable writings have had no other object than the highest good of mankind, who has done so much to make men wiser, happier, and better, and who has commended the religion of Christ to so many hearts and minds by his profound and beautiful expositions of its doctrines and spirit.

"*Resolved*, That we deeply sympathize with the family of our departed friend in their irreparable loss, and earnestly pray that the consolations of that religion, of which he was so faithful a minister, may be extended to them in proportion to the magnitude of their bereavement.

"*Resolved*, That the Standing Committee of the Proprietors, the Deacons of the Church, and the Clerk and Treasurer be a committee to make arrangements for a public funeral and appropriate services in the church, provided it be agreeable to the family of the deceased.

"*Resolved*, That Hon. Judge Davis, Mr. Rollins, and the Clerk be a committee to present a copy of the foregoing resolutions to the family of the late Dr. Channing, and that the Clerk also transmit a copy to Rev. Mr. Gannett.

"A true copy.

"Attest, GEO. S. HILLARD, *Proprietors' Clerk.*

"*Boston, October* 5, 1842."

The discourse was by Mr. Gannett, whose "words of simple truth" were the eulogy best befitting the place and occasion. At the close of the services, the vast assembly, by a spontaneous impulse, passed slowly up the middle aisle, to gaze for the last time upon the countenance, now calmly turned upward to the pulpit whence its light of love had for so many years shone down. Across the waxen brow the dark brown locks lay softly as in life; and he looked so like one entranced in a dream of glory, that the hand was slow to close the coffin-lid above a fleshly temple whose portal the spirit still seemed to brighten with its train.*

As the procession moved from the church, the bell of the Catholic cathedral was tolled; and it was grateful, at such a moment, to remember the just and cordial words in which Dr. Channing had offered his tribute of honor to the devoted Cheverus.†

At twilight, among the shades of Mount Auburn, the hands of relatives bore the bier, deposited the coffin, and covered with earth the remains of Channing.

A monument of fine white marble, designed by Washington Allston, and erected by the Federal Street congregation, marks his burial-place. It bears the following inscriptions, prepared by Mr. George Ticknor.

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* See Note C, at the end of the volume.

† Works, Vol. I., pp. 178, 179.

On one side of the Monument.

Here rest the remains of
WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING,
Born, 7 April, 1780,
at Newport, R. I.;
Ordained, 1 June, 1803,
as a minister of Jesus Christ
to the Society worshipping God
in Federal Street, Boston:
Died, 2 October, 1842,
while on a journey,
at Bennington, Vermont.

On the other side.

In Memory of
WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING,
honored throughout Christendom,
for his eloquence and courage
in maintaining and advancing
the Great Cause of
Truth, Religion, and Human Freedom,
This Monument
is gratefully and reverently erected
by the Christian Society,
of which, during nearly forty years,
he was Pastor.

NOTES.

NOTE A.

It is the tradition, that the rocks near the beach at Newport, which Dr. Channing was so fond of visiting, were much frequented by Bishop Berkeley, and that some of his works were there composed.

NOTE B.

I feel as if it were insulting the memory of my uncle to refer, even, to the assertion, that on his death-bed he changed his opinions. But the urgency of many correspondents induces me here to say, once for all, that there was *no foundation whatever* for such a rumor. Weakness, the violence of fever, and the earnest desire for his restoration prevented conversation on his part and ours. But every word, act, look, showed us how perfect was his peace. Every word that he is known to have spoken, indicating his own religious opinions and feelings, is recorded on the preceding pages. This distinct statement should for ever put an end to the calumny referred to, among all honest men.

W. H. C.

NOTE C.

This memoir would be incomplete without referring to the portraits and engravings of Dr. Channing now in existence. Great injustice has been done him in most of these representations. "The romantic and tender beauty" of his expression, as well as the power of thought in his countenance, has never been adequately given in any portrait; and all the engravings, with the exception of those in the present volumes, must be pronounced caricatures.

The engraving in the first volume is from an unfinished picture by Allston, in possession of the family, painted in 1811. The picture is full of ideal beauty, purity, devoutness, and youthful fervor, and much of this expression is preserved in the engraving. It is considered a very correct likeness by those who can look back to that period of Dr. Channing's life.

The engraving in the second volume is from a picture by S. Gambardella, painted in 1839, now in the possession of the Hon. Jonathan Phillips. This picture is the one by which Dr. Channing, as he appeared in later years, will be chiefly known. Seen under unfavorable lights, there is a harshness and look of abstraction in this picture which are not agreeable; but in a mellow light it preserves many characteristics of the original not elsewhere to be found. The engraving, though not perfect, is by far the best representation which has yet been published.

At least two copies of this picture have been made by Gambardella, but both very inferior to the original likeness. One of them belongs to the Hon. T. H. Perkins, of Boston. The other was sent to Glasgow, and engraved for the edition of Dr. Channing's Works published by Hedderwick & Co. But that engraving is equally devoid of likeness and of elevated expression.

There is a likeness by Gilbert Stuart in possession of the family, taken in middle life, which is very wanting in refined expression. It can never be regarded as in any sense a portrait of Dr. Channing, save to those who, from familiarity, have learned to trace out some resemblances through its defects.

The picture by Chester Harding is, perhaps, better known than any other, as it has been copied and also engraved by Hoogland. But no just views of the original can be obtained from this picture, and the engraving is without any redeeming feature.

A very unfinished picture, — a profile by George Flagg, — which is now in possession of the Rev. Dr. Parkman of Boston, gives a general image of the original, which is, in several respects, true and pleasing.

There is also a picture by Ingham, in possession of the family, painted from a sketch after death, and from memory, in 1843, which, though incorrect in some of the features and deficient in strength, recalls to those familiar with the original the sweetness and deep sentiment of his expression. Strangers, however, would never receive from it a just impression of Dr. Channing.

A pencil sketch, by Malbone, taken in early youth, presents a very pleasing contrast, by its air of full health and vigorous youthfulness, with those taken at a later period.

The bust of Persico, though tame and weak in character, is, in some respects, of value. The profile view is especially to be commended. The forehead is wanting in breadth and fulness. But, as a whole, this bust should rank next to the pictures engraved in this memoir.

Dr. Channing thus speaks of the various attempts to represent him: —

" *November* 20, 1835. I gave Mr. Persico no encouragement to make an experiment on my head. It is too thin, and has too little beauty for this art. Painting, I think, can take greater liberties than sculpture, and even painting has made poor work with my face. I am certainly not vain of my exterior. My countenance would not make me many friends, I fear. What has troubled me in my different portraits is, not that they have not given me a more intellectual expression, but that so little benevolence has beamed from the features. I have learned, with the Apostle, to prefer charity to all knowledge; and, if I am to be handed down to posterity, I should be pleased to speak from the stone or canvas, or rather to breathe from it, good-will to mankind."

"*August* 3, 1836. I am sitting for my likeness, — a wearisome task; but I was willing, as so many poor likenesses had been made, to try once more for a good one."

1838. "Mr. Gambardella has succeeded in his work. My friends are entirely satisfied with the picture. It is not only a good likeness, but a meritorious work of art. After so many unsuccessful attempts, this poor face is faithfully transferred to canvas, and, on the whole, is better worth looking at than I supposed."

W. F. C.

THE END.

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